Necessary frequent cross-referencing to the various branches of the family tree and to the appendices would make it impractical to read the book on-screen. It is more appropriate to download and print it FOR FREE. This page of the PDF file is, of course, not part of the book – it merely advises on printing and binding procedure, and should ultimately be discarded.

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The book contains 20 photos, so the second section of the file requires a printer set to print in colour on both sides. This section contains 40 A4 pages (each page which contains a photo along with the page on its reverse). These pages can then be inserted into their correct positions. Note that these pages are on pages 420 to 459 of the PDF file.

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If you need further advice you can contact the author on

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In any case, he will always be pleased to hear from distant cousins.

EARLY HISTORY

OF THE

TAPSON FAMILY

BY

ROBERT SEARLE TAPSON

Bury St. Edmunds
1996

Revised (with Addenda)
2008

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2017

PREFACE

Since the original publication of this history of the Tapson family in 1996 three major developments have made it necessary to include an Addendum (which now extends to sixty-five pages). Firstly, the 1901 and 1911 census returns have been made available, so allowing the narrative to run from the middle of the Sixteenth Century to the end of the Nineteenth and, for many branches of the family, into the early decades of the Twentieth. Secondly, over the intervening years family members from around the world have provided information about their ancestors who emigrated from the UK, so filling in most of the gaps where the narrative about a branch of the family was cut short because there was no further evidence in the UK about its members. Thirdly, the Internet, not available in 1996, has brought to light some new information, particularly from overseas archives, which could not be accessed when the original research was being undertaken; however, except where it is possible to see photographic images of original documents, internet indexes are second-hand and consequently liable to error, so must be treated with caution; moreover, many of the documents researched in 1996, usually the most interesting, will never find their way onto the internet.

Like any other history, this account can only be as complete as the evidence which survives or, more accurately, which has come to the attention of the researcher; however, it is hoped that it will at least provide a skeletal framework onto which any further evidence subsequently unearthed can easily be fitted, and that it will have something to offer to anyone bearing the Tapson name. Only male lines have been investigated, because it is the Tapson name, passing through the male line, which unites us as a family. Genealogically, only male-line ancestors constitute a pedigree (unlike that of a horse, in which the dams as well as the sires are included). One has, of course, to assume that if a birth certificate or baptismal entry exists for a child bearing the family name then he or she is in fact a Tapson; there is no way that one can take into account female frailty! Genealogists might have been on firmer ground if our early ancestors had decided upon a matriarhic society with the family name passing down through the female line; one can only hope that Tapson men have always chosen their women wisely! There are, nevertheless, a few instances of the Tapson name being passed down through the female line; the family historian is bound to uncover one or two skeletons in the cupboard.

It is not the aim of this work to produce an immense and impressive-looking family tree: for family trees are often suspect, especially if they are based primarily on the circumstantial evidence of parish registers of marriages, baptisms and burials. Many a spurious family tree exists because the compiler has ignored the precept that *if a person with the right name is found in the right place at the right time, then there is a good chance that that person is not the one for whom he, the compiler, is searching.* In these pages the intention is to present the evidence, both circumstantial and corroborative, so that the reader can judge for himself the weight of that evidence and make up his own mind, though unfortunately this approach does not lead to a fast and exciting narrative.

In spite of the earlier cautionary remarks about family trees, they do, when accurately compiled, enable an instant overview of family relationships. Thus for this purpose many family trees (or, more precisely, branches) will appear in the following chapters but, except where the evidence is overwhelming, they should be considered as carrying a Health Warning: *Not to be swallowed neat, but taken with a pinch of salt.* Sources of corroborative evidence to be found in these pages include wills, indentures relating to property conveyance, to mortgage deeds and to marriage settlements, manor court rolls, land tax assessments, school and university alumni lists, medical and clerical directories, commercial, trade and court directories, state papers, naval records, assize court and quarter sessions rulings, proceedings in the Court of Chancery and Star Chamber, and census returns. Crown copyright material in the National Archive Office is reproduced with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, and should not be further reproduced without permission. Copies of register entries on pages 22 and 31 are reproduced by permission of the Bishop of London and Guildhall Library, Corporation of London, and that on page 9 by permission of the Devon County Record Office; these too should not be further reproduced without permission.

The plan of this book is straightforward. In Chapter 1 a general discussion, based on documents of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries, of the probable origin (in the Devonshire parish of Buckland Monachorum) of the Tapson name is followed by a preliminary account of the dispersal of the Tapson family from their Devonshire homeland. Chapters 2 to 4 present detailed evidence about the lives of family members living in the Seventeenth and early Eighteenth Centuries. The Eighteenth-Century and Nineteenth-Century descendants of the branch of the Tapson family introduced in Chapter 4, to which the great majority (if not all) of present-day Tapsons belong, are investigated in Chapters 5 to 9 and Chapter 10 Part 1. Chapter 10, Part 2, deals with *Strays*, a few individuals, or small brnnches of the Tapson family, who are not descendants, or have not yet been proved to be descendants, of the Tapsons of Chapter 4. Although no account is given of Tapsons born after the Nineteenth Century, most Tapson readers should be able to lock into the family tree provided they can trace their ancestors back to that century, a comparatively easy task.

Of the 282 Tapsons whose births were registered in the 43½-year period immediately following the introduction on 1 July 1837 of civil registration of births, marriages and deaths (up to the end of 1880), 165 are proved in this book to have been descendants of Nicholas Tapson of Freesabeare and Agnes Ebsworthy of Ebsworthy Town, who were married on 21 February 1632/3 (Chapter 4). A further 12, who died in infancy, were probably descendants of Nicholas and Agnes, but for absolute proof copies of their birth certificates would have to be purchased. Another 63 are shown to have been descendants of the Tapsons of Stowford (Chapter 6), who were themselves almost certainly descendants of Nicholas and Agnes. Thus the descendants of Nicholas and Agnes account, beyond all reasonable doubt, for at least 85.10% of the 282 Tapson births registered in ths 43½-year period.

Another 23 of these births (8.16%) were descendants of James Tapson who appeared in South Petherwin in 1737 (Chapter 10, Part 1). James was, beyond reasonable doubt, a descendant of John Tapson of Freesabeare, one of Nicholas's brothers, who married Katherine Ebsworthy, the younger sister of Agnes, in 1638. Of the remaining 19 Tapson births (6.74%) 10 are included under *Sundry Strays* (Chapter 10, Part 2) and there is circumstantial evidence to suggest that these were also descendants of Nicholas and Agnes; the remaining 9, whose names are listed in Appendix II, may or may not have been their descendants.

Of the 236 Tapsons included in the 1881 census of England and Wales, 207 were descendants, or their spouses, of Nicholas Tapson and Agnes Ebsworthy, and a further 8 almost certainly were, though absolute proof of this remains to be found. Another 21 were descendants, or their spouses, of James Tapson. One family listed in the census was erroneously named as Tapson instead of Tipson; and a lodger in Stoke-on-Trent named as Charles L. Tapson was almost certainly not a Tapson, though his actual identity has not yet been ascertained. Ignoring these last two returns, we can fairly safely conclude that 91.1% of the Tapsons included in the 1881 census were descendants, or their spouses, of Nicholas and Agnes, and the remaining 8.9% were descendants, or their spouses, of James. Thus all the Tapsons listed in this census were, beyond reasonable doubt, descendants of Robert Tapson of Freesabeare, Buckland Monachorum, the father of Nicholas and John, and of Alexander Ebsworthy of Ebsworthy Town, Bridestowe, the father of Agnes and Katherine. The implication must be that other branches of the Tapson family had already emigrated, or had failed to maintain the male line, or had undergone a name-change. Indeed, it would seem that every Tapson now alive in the UK (and probably worldwide) is a descendant of Robert Tapson and of Alexander Ebsworthy: no evidence has yet been found of any Tapson from a different branch of the family living anywhere in the UK or abroad.

In the following text original documents, and extracts from original documents, are quoted in italics. The original spelling and punctuation have been carefully retained (in so far as the handwriting and the physical condition of the original document makes this possible) but abbreviations have generally been expanded. Before the Eighteenth Century there was little conformity of spelling, or indeed consistency by any individual writer, who might spell a word in different ways even in the same sentence. Original documents to which reference is made are to be found in the following places:

PRO National Archives, Ruskin Avenue, Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 4DU
(formerly the Public Record Office)
GLRO London Metropolitan Archives, 40 Northampton Road, London EC1R 0HB
(formerly the Greater London Record Office)
CWAC City of Westminster Archive Centre, 10 St Ann's Street, London SW1P 2XR
GL Guildhall Library, Aldermanbury, London EC2P 2EJ
DRO Devon Record Office, Castle Street, Exeter EX4 3PU
WDRO West Devon Record Office, Unit 3, Clare Place, Coxside, Plymouth PL4 0JW
WSL Westcountry Studies Library, Castle Street, Exeter EX4 3PU
CRO Cornwall Record Office, County Hall, Truro TR1 3AY
CL Courtney Library, Royal Institute of Cornwall, River Street, Truro TR1 2SJ
SRO Somerset Record Office, Obridge Road, Taunton TA2 7PU
ESRO East Sussex Record Office, The Maltings, Castle Precincts, Lewes BN7 1YT
VHMA Vestry House Museun & Archives, Vestry Road, Walthamstow E17 9NH

In addition, wills proved on or after 11 January 1858 are to be found at

PPR Principal Probate Registry, First Ave. House, 42-49 High Holborn, London WC1V 6HA

Some of the branches of the family tree displayed in Chapters 1 to 4 depend to quite a considerable extent on circumstantial evidence, and so they should always be studied in conjunction with the text which precedes them. For most of those from Chapter 5 onwards, however, there is usually such a wealth of corroborative evidence that for the most part they can be considered as reasonably reliable; even so, the preceding text should be checked for the nature of this evidence. Conversely, the text will usually become more meaningful, and family relationships more apparent, if the relevant branch of the family tree is frequently referred to. In all branches of the family tree Gregorian dates (page 8) are used consistently, as are the following abbreviations:

a age, **b** born, **c** about (*circa*), **d** died, **bap** baptized, **bur** buried, = married.

Section numbers shown in circles enable rapid cross-reference between various branches of the family tree; the Table of Contents is also intended to be used as an index.

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CHAPTER 1

ORIGINS

1.1 THE BUCKLAND MONACHORUM CONJECTURE

Although we shall never know for certain, there is strong circumstantial evidence to suggest that the Tapson name may have originated in the south-west corner of Devonshire, possibly in the parish of Buckland Monachorum, *monachorum* being the genitive plural of the Mediæval Latin word *monachus* meaning *monk*. *Buckland of the Monks* was so called because Buckland Abbey, of the Cistercian Order, was founded there in 1278. In the Domesday survey of 1086 the parish is called *Bocheland* or *Bochelanda*; the Episcopal Registers of the Diocese of Exeter of 1271-6 refer to it as *Bockelonde*; but in the *Taxatio Ecclesiastica* (Supplement to Bishop Bronescombe's Register) of 1291, thirteen years after the establishment of the abbey there, the parish has acquired the name *Boclonde Monachorum*.*

Nestling among the sheltered south-western foothills of the great granite mass of Dartmoor, the village of Buckland Monachorum is about four miles south of its nearest market town, Tavistock, and nine miles north of the city and naval port of Plymouth. This peaceful little village has changed little over the centuries, although nowadays it can become quite bustling during the tourist season, the principal attraction being the abbey, a mile to the south of the village.

The Dissolution of the Monasteries (1536-1540) was motivated by the financial needs of King Henry VIII, who confiscated the monastic wealth and property, and it was excused on the grounds of the alleged decadence of the monastic orders and the scandalous lives of their members. By the time of the Dissolution of Buckland Abbey in 1539 the Tapson family was well established in Buckland Monachorum, as the following extracts from the earliest Parish Registers of Marriages, Baptisms and Burials clearly demonstrate. (A reference alongside an entry denotes the section of this book in which that entry is discussed.)

*GOVER, MAWER & STENTON: The Place-Names of Devon (2 Vol) C.U.P. 1931

Buckland Monachorum Marriages from 1540 to 1750

3	Feb	1543	Robertus Hawthorne	Johanna Tapson	
3	Oct	1545	Thomas Pocter	Johanna Tapson	
11	Jul	1546	Johannes Hawthorne	Jana Tapson	
28	Jan	1547	Tapson	Paschalie Forde	
10	Nov	1555	Johannes Tapson	Margeria Reep	
10	Nov	1562	Johannes Tapson	Thomasina	
4	Feb	1564	Johannes Tapson	Margareta	
	May	1567	Nicholaus Averye	Maria Tapson	
9	Jul	1570	Richardus Lanxforde	Johanna Tapson	
12	Aug	1571	Guilielmus Tapson	Agnes	
25	May	1573	Hugo Tapson	Johanna Crocker	1.5
8	Jun	1573	Guilielmus Tapson	Margareta Hearde	
29	May	1586	Guilielmus Lavers	Margareta Tapson	
13	Nov	1587	Robertus Scoble	Johanna Tapson	
18	Aug	1589	Johannes Tapsham	Thomasina Knighton	1.5
14	Oct	1594	Georgius Gye	Richarda Tapson	
9	Feb	1595	Guilielmus Gye	Katharina Tapson	
9	May	1597	Thomas Tapson	Agnes Palmer	3.7
9	Oct	1597	Johannes Bonde	Thomasina Tapson	
15	May	1598*	Richardus Browne	Margareta Tapson	
4	Oct	1602	Thomas Riche	Alicia Tapson	
23	Dec	1605	Rodolphus Tapson	Margareta Brounsdon	
26	Jan	1606	Christopherus Tapson	Katharina Foote	3.4
29	Apr	1611	Anthonius Tyrrell	Margeria Tapson	
8	Jul	1611	Philippus Foote	Richarda Tapson	
9	Oct	1615	Johannes Stephen	Alicia Tapson	
9	Oct	1615	Robertus Tapson	Elizabetha Ashe	4.4
4	Jun	1621	Richardus Foote	Temperancia Tapson	4.4
20	Jan	1622	Richardus Foote	Katharina Tapson	
8	Feb	1622	Johannes Tapson	Alicia Zayer	
9	Feb	1623	Johannes Tapson	Johanna Dunriche	
4	Sep	1627	Richardus Tapson	Elizabetha Hooper	
22	Apr	1628	Elizeus Tapson	Edna Cole	3.13
18	Jan	1629	Johannes Tapson	Thomasina Foote	
17	Jan	1631	Georgius Eustice	Joanna Tapson	
9	Nov	1633	Johannes Riche	Richarda Tapson	
20	Jan	1634	Pascow Tregalles	Agnes Tapson	
27	Jul	1635	Guilielmus Tapson	Elizabetha Walter	3.5
14	Jan	1636	Willelmus Tapson	Elizabetha Lavers	3.5
7	Aug	1638	Johannes Tapson	Katherina Ebsworthy	4.4
29	May	1647	Johannes Tapson	Agnes Palmer	4.8
2	Sep	1657	William Tapson	Richaurd Winny	3.5
24	Nov	1663	Richard Tapson	Johan Stacy	
16	Oct	1666	John Tapson	Elizabeth Parnell	4.8
2	Oct	1667	Degory Merifield	Temperance Tapson	
24	May	1671	Thomas Tapson	Elizabeth May	
22	Jan	1683	Samuel Tucker	Elizabeth Tapson	

*See Addenda Page 379 (reference to p 49).

25	May	1600	Avisia	filia	Johannis Tapson	
3	Sep	1600	Thomas	filius	Richardi Tapson	2.2
8	Oct	1600	Juliana	filia	Thome Tapson	3.7
14	Dec	1601	Thomas	filius	Roberti Tapson	4.4
14	Dec	1603	Johannes	filii	Johannis Tapson	
			Richardus			
25	Mar	1604	Nicholaus	filius	Roberti Tapson	4.4
18	Feb	1604	Robertus	filius	Johannis Tapson	
8	Mar	1605	Johanna	filia	Rodolphi Tapson	
1	Jan	1606	Blancha	filia	Guilielmi Tapson	
25	Jan	1606	Helena	filia	Roberti Tapson	4.4
24	Nov	1607	Richarda	filia	Christopheri Tapson	3.4
29	Jun	1608	Thomasina	filia	Johannis Tapson	
17	Mar	1608	Johannes	filius posthumus	Rodolphi Tapson	
13	May	1610	Christopherus	filius	Christopheri Tapson	3.4
7	Oct	1612	Guilielmus	filius	Christopheri Tapson	3.4
18	Jun	1615	Temperancia	filia	Christopheri Tapson	3.4
24	Feb	1621	Philippus	filius	Thome Tapson	
13	Mar	1623	Margareta	filia	Johannis Tapson	
29	Jan	1625	Richardus	filius	Johannis Tapson	
14	Jan	1626	Johannes	filius	Thome Tapson	
1	Mar	1628	Elizabetha	filia	Johannis Tapson	
3	Feb	1635	Robertus	filius	Nicholai Tapson	4.4
27	Jul	1636	Elizabetha	filia	Guilielmi Tapson	3.5
8	Mar	1637	Willelmus	filius	Willelmi Tapson	3.5
10	Oct	1638	Katherina	filia	Nicholai Tapson	4.4
16	Oct	1639	Johannes	filius	Johannis Tapson	4.8
25	Oct	1640	Joanna	filia	Guilielmi Tapson	3.5
14	Apr	1641	Margeria	filia	Johannis Tapson	4.8
31	Jul	1642	Thomas	filius	Guilielmi Tapson	3.5
	May	1645	Elizabetha	filia	Willelmi Tapson	3.5
19	Dec	1646	Joanna	filia	Guilielmi Tapson	3.5
15	Apr	1648	Elizabetha	filia	Johannis Tapson	4.8
23	Apr	1651	Robertus	filius	Johannis Tapson	4.8
27	Mar	1653	Christopher	filius	Willelmi Tapson	3.5
15	May	1664	John	son of	Richard Tapson & Johan	
4	Jun	1665	Agnes	dau of	Richard Tapson & Johan	
23	Jul	1667	Mary	dau of	John Tapson & Elizabeth	4.8
18	Dec	1668	Elizabeth	dau of	John Tapson & Elizabeth	4.8
27	Jul	1669	Robert	son of	Richard Tapson & Johan	
21	Oct	1670	John	son of	John Tapson & Elizabeth	4.8
			Hester	dau of	John Tapson & Elizabeth	4.8
11	Aug	1672	Joseph	son of	John Tapson & Elizabeth	4.8
30	Mar	1674	Katherine	dau of	John Tapson & Elizabeth	4.8
			Wilmot	dau of	John Tapson & Elizabeth	4.8
16	Feb	1675	Robert	son of	John Tapson & Elizabeth	4.8
13	May	1678	Priscilla	dau of	John Tapson & Elizabeth	4.8
22	Apr	1680	Margaret	dau of	John Tapson & Elizabeth	4.8
5	Dec	1699	Mary	dau of	John Tapson & Catherine	4.8

Buckland Monachorum Burials from 1538 to 1750

13	*Feb*	*1542*	*Hugo Tapson*	
18	*Sep*	*1543*	*Nicholaus Tapson*	
18	*Mar*	*1544*	*Johanna Tapson filia Johannis*	
16	*Dec*	*1545*	*Richardus Tapson*	
16	*Jul*	*1547*	*Johannes Tapson*	
5	*Dec*	*1547*	*Alicia Tapson*	
5	*Dec*	*1548*	*Margareta Tapson filia Johannis*	
7	*Mar*	*1551*	*Guilielmus Tapson*	
12	*Mar*	*1551*	*Johannes Tapson*	
15	*Jun*	*1552*	*Thomasina Tapson filia Johannis*	
23	*Jun*	*1553*	*Petrus Tapson filius Johannis*	
12	*Jun*	*1557*	*Agnes Tapson*	
26	*Aug*	*1557*	*Thomas Tapson*	
28	*Feb*	*1558*	*Johannes Tapson*	
5	*Apr*	*1561*	*Johanna Tapson*	
25	*Oct*	*1568*	*Johannes Tapson filius Johannis*	
8	*Oct*	*1569*	*Alicia Tapson*	
13	*Aug*	*1570*	*Alicia Tapson filia Johannis*	
6	*Feb*	*1571*	*Johannes Tapson*	
13	*Aug*	*1573*	*Johanna Tapson uxor Hugonis*	*1.5*
1	*Feb*	*1575*	*Margareta Tapson uxor Johannis*	
19	*Nov*	*1577*	*Christopherus Tapson filius Johannis*	
16	*Dec*	*1577*	*Alicia Tapson*	
17	*Apr*	*1578*	*Johannes Tapson de Bere*	*4.6*
2	*May*	*1578*	*Maria Tapson filia Hugonis*	*1.5*
3	*May*	*1578*	*Alicia Tapson filia Hugonis*	*1.5*
19	*Aug*	*1578*	*Thomas Tapson*	
21	*Dec*	*1583*	*Agnes Tapson vidua*	
8	*Aug*	*1584*	*Johannes Tapson de Heale*	
9	*Sep*	*1585*	*Agnes Tapson filia Guilielmi*	
11	*Dec*	*1586*	*Hugo Tapson*	*1.5*
16	*Dec*	*1592*	*Agnes Tapson filia Johannis*	
25	*Dec*	*1592*	*Guilielmus Tapson*	
23	*Jul*	*1593*	*Rabigia Tapson filia Johannis*	
26	*Jul*	*1593*	*Johanna Tapson filia Johannis*	
24	*Feb*	*1595*	*Amisia Tapson filia Johannis*	
4	*Sep*	*1596*	*Johanna Tapson*	
1	*May*	*1597*	*Philippus Tapson*	
15	*Dec*	*1603*	*Johannes Tapson filius Johannis*	
21	*Dec*	*1603*	*Richardus Tapson filius Johannis*	
24	*Jul*	*1608*	*Guilielmus Tapson*	
19	*Nov*	*1608*	*Rodolphus Tapson*	
15	*Jan*	*1609*	*Richardus Tapson filius Johannis*	
6	*Mar*	*1616*	*Robertus Tapson filius Roberti*	*4.4*
15	*May*	*1617*	*Christopherus Tapson*	*3.4*
18	*Oct*	*1617*	*Avisia Tapson filia Johannis*	
9	*Nov*	*1617*	*Johannes Tapson*	
27	*Apr*	*1619*	*Richardus Tapson*	*3.4*
25	*Mar*	*1622*	*Johanna Tapson vidua*	
4	*Mar*	*1625*	*Guilielmus Tapson de Beare*	*4.6*
10	*Dec*	*1628*	*Agnes Tapson vidua*	

22	*Feb*	*1629*	*Margareta Tapson vidua*	*3.4*
13	*Jul*	*1630*	*Richardus Tapson*	
26	*Jul*	*1630*	*Thomasina Tapson*	
18	*Dec*	*1630*	*Thomasina Tapson vidua*	
16	*Aug*	*1632*	*Thomas Tapson senior*	*3.7*
28	*May*	*1634*	*Thomas Tapson junior*	*3.7*
22	*Aug*	*1634*	*Infans Nicholai Tapson*	*4.4*
21	*Jun*	*1636*	*Rogerus Tapson*	
2	*Aug*	*1636*	*Elizabetha Tapson uxor Willelmi*	*3.5*
8	*Feb*	*1636*	*Elizabetha Tapson filia Willelmi*	*3.5*
14	*Nov*	*1637*	*Robertus Tapson*	*4.5*
1	*Mar*	*1640*	*Margeria Tapson vidua*	*4.5*
5	*Aug*	*1641*	*Joanna filia Guilielmi Tapson*	*3.5*
11	*Sep*	*1641*	*Margeria filia Johannis Tapson*	*4.8*
13	*Dec*	*1642*	*Infans Johannis Tapson*	*4.8*
25	*Mar*	*1643*	*Margarita Tapson*	
18	*Jan*	*1643*	*Katherina Tapson uxor Johannis*	*4.8*
17	*Aug*	*1647*	*Joanna Tapson filia Guilielmi*	*3.5*
5	*Mar*	*1647*	*Margarita Tapson vidua*	
11	*May*	*1655*	*Elizabeth Tapson*	
6	*Dec*	*1655*	*Christopher Tapson son of William Tapson*	*3.5*
12	*Dec*	*1655*	*Elizabeth Tapson wife of William*	*3.5*
24	*Mar*	*1655*	*Richaurd Tapson spinster*	
8	*Sep*	*1658*	*Ellize Tapson*	*3.13*
18	*May*	*1664*	*John son of Richard Tapson*	
9	*Dec*	*1664*	*Robert Tapson of Sampford Spiny*	*3.13*
10	*Sep*	*1665*	*John Tapson of Freesabeere*	*4.8*
1	*Jan*	*1665*	*John Tapson of Beare*	*4.6*
21	*Mar*	*1670*	*Hester dau of John Tapson*	*4.8*
10	*Jul*	*1671*	*Thomas Tapson*	
4	*Oct*	*1673*	*Richard Tapson*	
9	*Aug*	*1674*	*Wilmot dau of John Tapson*	*4.8*
9	*Dec*	*1675*	*Richaurd wife of William Tapson*	*3.5*
5	*May*	*1676*	*Hester the dau of John Tapson*	*4.8*
2	*Jul*	*1678*•	*Anne Tapson of Meavy widow*	
17	*Feb*	*1678*	*Priscilla dau of John Tapson*	*4.8*
5	*May*	*1680*	*John Tapson*	*4.8*
5	*Jul*	*1680*	*William Tapson cordwyner*	*3.5*
18	*Apr*	*1681*	*Margaret dau of John Tapson*	*4.8*
26	*Aug*	*1683*	*Joseph son of John Tapson*	*4.8*

Mediæval Latin Words Used in the Registers

filius	son	*filii*	sons
filia	daughter	*filie*	daughters
uxor	wife	*vidua*	widow

•See Page 372 (St. Ive marriage).

1.2 PARISH REGISTERS

Parish registers were first introduced in England in 1538. Only about 800 still exist from that date, but a larger number survive from around 1558, the beginning of the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, although these early registers are often incomplete or illegible. However, from 1598 copies of parish register entries had to be sent annually to the Diocesan Registry, and these *bishop's transcripts* sometimes survive when the original registers are lost or partly missing. The earliest Buckland Monachorum register dates from 1540 for marriages, 1552 for baptisms, and 1538 for burials. It is in a remarkable condition; apart from slight staining on the first few pages it might have been written yesterday, as can be seen from the reproduction on the next page of the fourth page of the register which contains three references to members of the Tapson family, although the earliest entries were probably a compilation from loose sheets of paper when parchment books were made obligatory in 1603.

It will be observed that some of the entries in the foregoing lists appear to be out of chronological order. For instance, the baptism on 12 December 1586 of Richarda Tapson was followed by the baptism of Margareta Tapson on 22 January 1586. The explanation is that, until 1 January 1752, the year began on 25 March, the Feast of the Annunciation. Before that date, any dates in January, in February, and in March up to the 24th, belonged to the same year as the preceding December. When the changeover was made from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar, which had been in use in the rest of Europe since 1582, the day following 31 December 1751 became 1 January 1752. This changeover also necessitated the loss of eleven days from September 1752, so that 2 September 1752 was followed by 14 September 1752; this resulted in outbreaks of rioting in which the crowds, believing that their lives were being shortened, cried *Give us back our eleven days.*

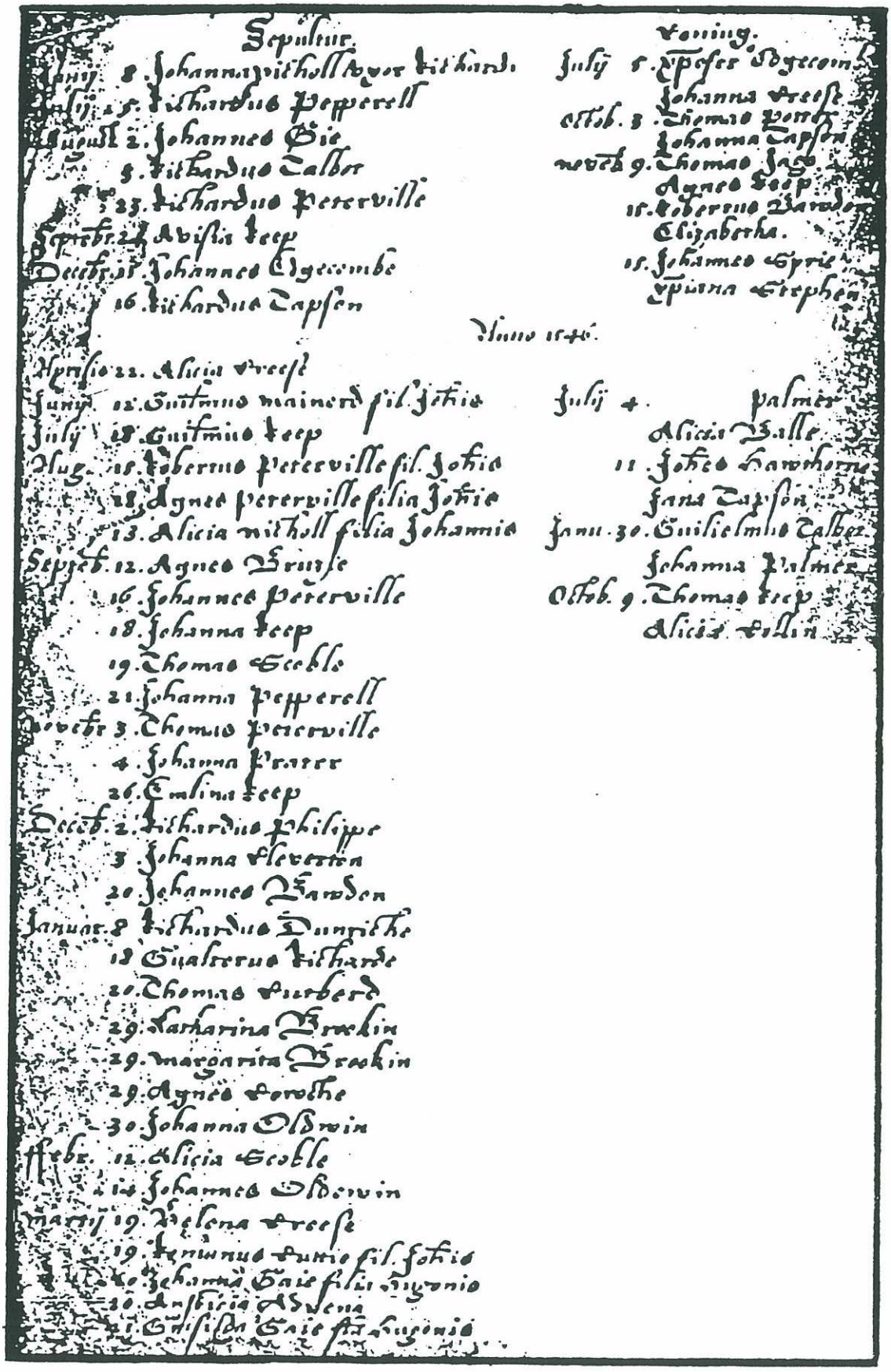
Before 1733, except for the period 1651 to 1660, Latin was the compulsory language of many types of legal documents and often, by the writer's choice, of other records. First names given in the early parish registers are thus the Latinized form of the English names which would have been in everyday use.

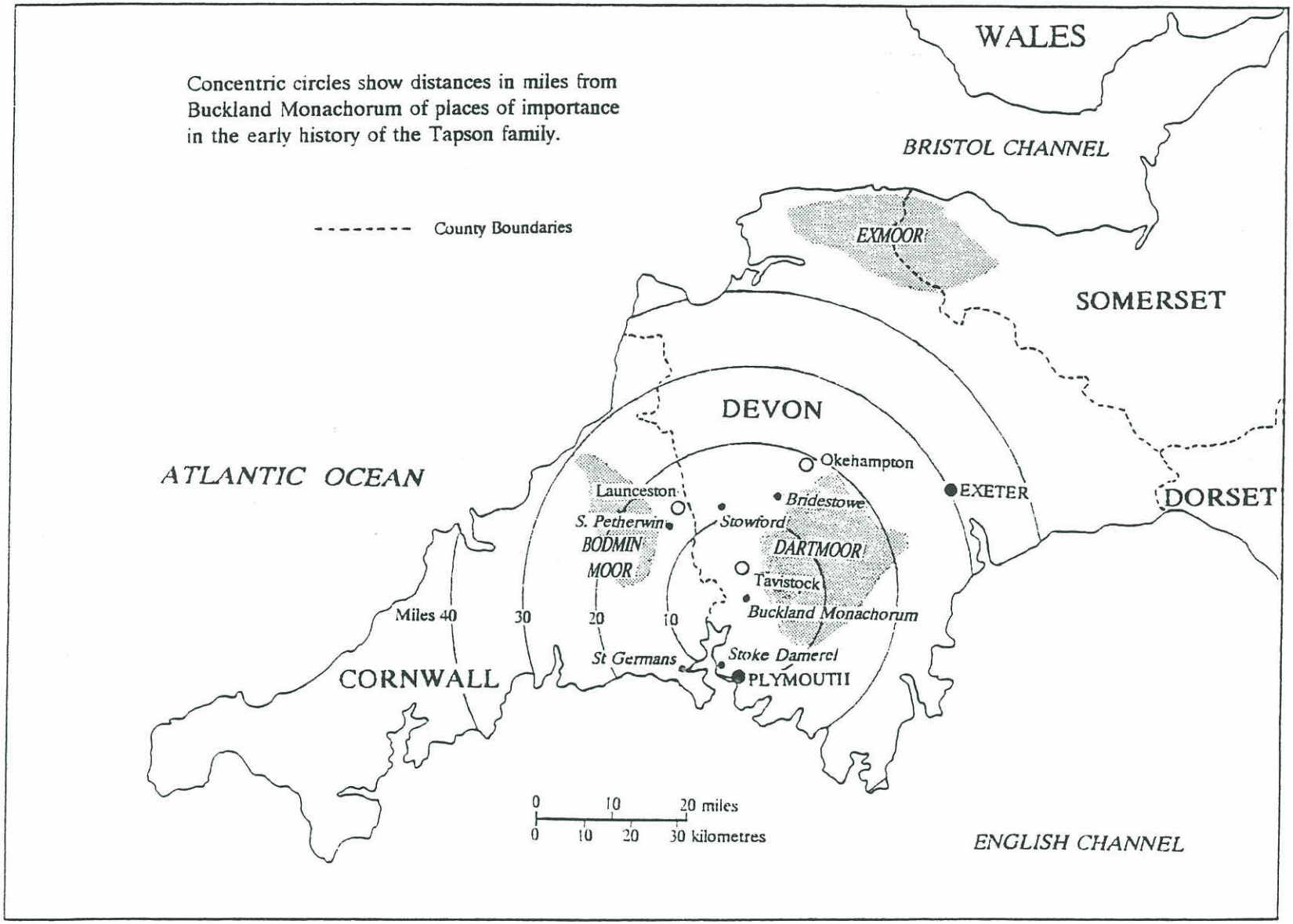
Surnames were introduced into England in the eleventh century by some of the more prominent Normans, but usually inherited only by the eldest sons. The custom of applying a man's name to all his children developed slowly, at first only among the upper classes, and it was not until about 1450 that hereditary surnames were in universal use in England. The subsequent spelling of a surname was often determined by its spelling in the early parish registers. The *Tapson* surname, meaning *son of Tapp*, is said to be derived from an Old English first name *Tæppa*. Although the name *Tæppa* has not survived in the written records and is of unknown meaning, it is considered to have given rise to the first element in place-names such as Taplow (Buckinghamshire), Tapners and Tappington (Kent), and Tapton (Derbyshire). The use of *Tapp* as a surname occurs as early as 1194, when John and Roger Tappe were mentioned in the Dorset Pipe Rolls.* In Devonshire, *Tapp* was fairly common as a surname, certainly by the sixteenth century, though in the north rather than in the south-west of the county where the Tapsons were to be found. The name *Tapp* also forms the first element of other surnames such as *Tapscott* and *Tapping*, the latter also meaning *son of Tapp*. For a further discussion and alternative derivation of the *Tapson* name, see page 16.

The word *tap*, derived from the Old English common noun *tæppa*, originally meant a stopper, or bung, for a cask. A *tapper*, from the associated Old English noun *tæppere*, was a tapper of casks and therefore a beer-seller or tavern-keeper; this is the meaning of the surname *Tapper*. A *tapster*, from *tæppestre*, the female form of *tæppere*, was thus a woman who sold ale, a barmaid or hostess; this is the derivation of the surname *Tapster*. There is, however, no evidence to suggest that the first name *Tæppa* was in any way related to the common noun *tæppa* meaning a bung. And the surnames *Taper* and *Tapner* are quite unrelated to either: *Taper* means *a maker of tapers*, from the Old English *tapur*, a wax-candle; and *Tapner* comes from the word *tapener*, of unknown derivation, meaning *a maker of chalons and burel* (blankets and coarse woollen cloth).

*P.H. REANEY: A Dictionary of British Surnames Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd 1958

A Page from the Buckland Monachorum Parish Register




Concentric circles show distances in miles from Buckland Monachorum of places of importance in the early history of the Tapson family.
County Boundaries
WALES
BRISTOL CHANNEL
EXMOOR
SOMERSET
DEVON
ATLANTIC OCEAN
Okehampton
EXETER
DORSET
Launceston
Bridestowe
S. Petherwin
Stowford
BODMIN MOOR
DARTMOOR
Tavistock
Buckland Monachorum
Miles 40
30
20
10
St Germans
Stoke Damerel
PLYMOUTH
CORNWALL
0 10 20 miles
0 10 20 30 kilometres
ENGLISH CHANNEL

1.3 BUCKLAND MONACHORUM IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

Even after the Dissolution Buckland Abbey continued to play an important part in the life of the parish in which the Tapsons were concentrated in the Sixteenth Century, for it was sold by Henry VIII to Sir Richard Grenville, a member of an aristocratic Bideford family, who demolished many of the buildings but converted the abbey church into a Tudor mansion. About 1580 his grandson, also named Sir Richard Grenville (of the *Revenge*), sold the estate to Sir Francis Drake, who used it as his principal residence when not at sea. Thus the Buckland Monachorum Tapsons, although living far from London, must have been quite well-informed about national events. There would have been much talk about the death at sea in 1545 of Roger Grenville (father of the younger Sir Richard) when the *Mary Rose*, the second largest ship of Henry VIII's fleet, capsized and of the death of Sir Richard himself in 1591 when the English fleet was caught unawares, leaving the *Revenge*, under Sir Richard's command, alone to face the 53 Spanish galleons, on which he inflicted much damage before losing to the enemy his own ship, which subsequently sank in a gale.

The Sixteenth-Century Tapsons would have known of Sir Francis Drake, who was born into a local farming and sea-faring family, as he set out on his many expeditions from the nearby port of Plymouth. They would have heard of his adventures as a successful pirate on the Spanish Main (1570-73), of his voyage of circumnavigation in the *Golden Hind* (1577-80), of his ransacking of Carthagena (1586) and his wreaking havoc on the Spanish fleet at Cadiz (1587), and could not have failed to hear of his part in the scattering of the Armada (1588). The Buckland Monachorum Tapsons would no doubt have discussed the injustice of his subsequent court-martialling after an unsuccessful plundering trip to the Azores and his enforced retirement at Buckland Abbey for five years, in disgrace with the Queen, and would have been saddened to hear of his death at sea in 1596 during his final expedition against the Spanish.

1.4 SIXTEENTH-CENTURY TAPSONS

With such a concentration of Tapsons in Buckland Monachorum in the Sixteenth Century almost certainly there would have been, as the century progressed, some movement into contiguous Devonshire parishes. Moreover, the village of Buckland Monachorum lies only about two miles from the river Tamar which, for most of its length, forms the boundary between the two counties of Devon and Cornwall, so that migration westward into Cornwall might also be expected, especially bearing in mind the physical barrier of Dartmoor to the east. Unfortunately, of the eight parishes adjoining Buckland Monachorum, parish registers for the Sixteenth Century survive for only two, Bere Ferrers (from 1538) and Whitchurch(from 1559).

Unlike those of Buckland Monachorum, the early registers of Bere Ferrers are not well-preserved, especially those before 1646; the early bishop's transcripts for the parish are likewise in a poor state of preservation. The earliest discernible Tapson entry is a baptism in 1696 (page 89) and, whilst it is possible that there were earlier entries no longer legible, it is certainly not the case that the pages are sprinkled with the Tapson name as are those of the Buckland Monachorum register.

The Whitchurch registers contain no Tapson entry in the Sixteenth Century, and even in the Seventeenth Century the only possible references to the Tapson name are the baptisms on 22 January 1665/6, 14 January 1667/8 and 21 March 1670/1 of John, Mary and Richard, children of *Richard Dapson*. [A date such as that of the baptism of John, written as 22 January 1665/6, means that the date of 1665 (Julian calendar) was written in the parish register; this would have been 1666 in the Gregorian calendar already in use elsewhere in Europe.]

In the absence of further evidence from parish registers of Tapsons residing outside Buckland Monachorum parish in the Sixteenth Century, it is necessary to turn to other surviving records, such as Muster Rolls (§1.5) and Lay Subsidy Assessments (§1.6).

1.5 MUSTER ROLLS

Mustering arose out of an obligation on all able men between the ages of 16 and 60 to bear arms in home defence (although many were considered *unable*). It was first put on a regular basis in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and in 1569 all counties had to hold a general muster because of the fear of a Spanish invasion. This muster probably took place in June at convenient places all over each county, but not everywhere on the same day.

The 1569 muster roll for Cornwall* is complete for all parishes, with only a small loss of names from illegibility or mutilation; it contains 12,395 names. That for Devon† contains 17,778 names, with 25 parishes missing. No Tapson is listed in either county, and the only name in any way similar is *Hugh Tapsam a pikeman*, which appears in *Bucklond Monachorum Parrishe* under the heading *The names of all thabell menne.*

The Buckland Monachorum parish register records the marriage in 1589 of *Johannes Tapsham* (page 2), so it is possible that Hugh Tapsam was a member of a Tapsham family. However, the marriage of John Tapsham was quickly followed by baptisms, not of children of John Tapsham, but of children of John Tapson — in fact, two men named John Tapson started to raise families in Buckland Monachorum at that time — and there is no further mention in the Buckland Monachorum registers of a Tapsham. Moreover, just four years after the general muster a *Hugo Tapson* married *Johanna Crocker* at Buckland Monachorum, on 25 May 1573 (page 2), and less that three months later *Johanna Tapson uxor Hugonis* was buried, on 13 August (page 6). Hugh must have remarried, because in 1575 and 1577 two daughters of Hugh Tapson, Maria and Alicia, were baptized (page 4); they were buried on successive days, on 2 and 3 May 1578 (page 6). Hugh was buried in 1586. This Hugh (one assumes there was only one, for there are no other burials recorded of a Hugh Tapson — except many years before in 1542) might well have been the pikeman in 1569.

A Court Roll (page 112) of the Manor of Buckland Monachorum (WDRO 70/29) dated 27 November 1602 records the lease of land to *Robert Tapson* and a further lease to his eldest son, *Robert Tapson Junior*, and two of his brothers (page 113). However, included among the list of jurors (*Juratores*) at that court is the name *Robertus Tapsham*, and under the heading *Essonia* (page 112) the list of those presenting excuses for non-attendance at court includes the names *Johannes Tapsham* and *Johanna Tapsham*. The minutes of the Manor Court were written in the much-abbreviated Mediæval Latin customarily used at the time. (In this book the abbreviated words are expanded and a translation provided.) One of the items of business dealt with at the court was minuted thus:

> *Decennarius manerii predicti videlicet Richardus Tapsham presentavit quod Edmondus Donriche Willhelmus George et Willhelmus Stephen molendinarii infra manerium predictum ceperunt ..... excessiv... ideo quilibet eorum in misericordia*
>
> [The tithingman (page 112) of the aforesaid manor, namely Richard Tapsham, presented that Edmund Donriche, William George and William Stephen, millers within the aforesaid manor, charged excessive prices(?); therefore each of them in mercy.]

Several more items of business, dealing with other evidence presented by Richard Tapsham, resulted in further men being placed *in misericordia*, that is, at the mercy and discretion of the lord of the manor.

The Court Roll dated 14 May 1603 listed among the jurors *Thomas Tapsham*, and the list of essoin included the name *Willimus Tapsham*. As already noted, the name *Tapsham* does not appear among the baptisms recorded in the parish register, but at this time families were being raised by Robert Tapson, John Tapson, Richard Tapson, Thomas Tapson and William Tapson, so it seems highly probable that they were the men mentioned in the manor court rolls. On the matter of spelling it is worth observing that, although the writers of the muster rolls must have had some degree of literacy, and the writer of the manor court rolls some training in Latin and legal matters, names were generally spelt phonetically, in the way the writers thought they heard them pronounced.

*H.L. DOUCH(Ed): The Cornwall Muster Roll for 1569, Pub. by T.L. Stoate, 1984

†A.J. HOWARD & T.L. STOATE(Eds): The Devon Muster Roll for 1569, Pub. by T.L. Stoate, 1977

1.6 SIXTEENTH-CENTURY DEVONSHIRE LAY SUBSIDY ASSESSMENTS

By the Thirteenth Century land was no longer the only indication of a person's wealth, and so a new tax on movables (that is, not land or buildings) was introduced. Assessments for this tax, known as a *Lay Subsidy*, survive fairly completely for Devonshire for the years 1332, 1524-5, 1543-5 and 1581, and have been transcribed and indexed. These Lay Subsidy assessments, written on parchment rolls, were arranged by parish, and the parishes were then grouped into *hundreds*, the administrative units into which the counties had been divided since early times; Cornwall was divided into 9 hundreds and Devonshire, a much larger county, into 32.

The 1332 Subsidy. Before 1334 the names of taxpayers were listed, and the 1332 lay subsidy is the most complete return of that period for Devonshire. The tax on movables was at a rate of one-fifteenth in the country and one-tenth in the towns, hence it was known as *the fifteenth and the tenth*. From 1334 the tax officers negotiated with local communities on a collective basis for a payment from each tithing (page 112), hamlet, borough or demesne (page 104), though imposing the condition that the assessed sums were to be at least equal to those of 1332; so the assessment rolls of 1334 and after, for nearly two centuries, do not contain the names of individuals.

The 1332 subsidy returns list no name similar to *Tapson* in *Boclond* or anywhere else in Devonshire.* It could be that at that time the fortunes of the Tapsons had not put them into the tax-bracket; it could even be that in 1332 Tapp was still relishing the prospect of founding a dynasty.

The 1524-5 Subsidies. The lay subsidy rolls of 1524-7 are the first substantial taxation lists after those of 1332 to give the names of inhabitants. The tax was now on Land or Goods or Wages, but only on one of these for each individual. Annual income from land was taxed at one shilling in the pound; goods of £20 or more were taxed at one shilling in the pound, goods between £2 and £20 at sixpence in the pound, and goods under £2 at the flat rate of fourpence; annual wages over £1 were also taxed at the flat rate of fourpence. [Before 1972 the British system of money comprised the pound (Latin *libra*), the shilling (Latin *solidus*) and the penny (Latin *denarius*); there were 12 pence in a shilling and 20 shillings in a pound. At the period we are now considering, a sum of money would have been written in the form xj li iij s vj d, the abbreviations being derived from the Latin names for the monetary units; later, the same sum of money would have been written as £11 3s 6d or as £11 - 3 - 6. A smaller sum would have been written in the form 3 / 4 (three shillings and fourpence), the symbol / denoting an elongated *s*, the abbreviation for a *solidus*.]

For Devonshire the 1526 roll is a nil return and half of the 1527 roll is illegible. Using the 1524 and 1525 rolls, T. L. Stoate† has produced a list for one or other of these years with only eight parishes completely missing and a further twelve partially missing. There is again no entry for a Tapson, and the only similar-sounding names appearing anywhere in Devonshire are in Roborough Hundred (which has three of the missing parishes). These names, which may be checked from the original rolls (PRO E179/96/153), are

Philip Topsham	*Goods £6*
William Topsham	*Goods £2*
Thomas Topsham	*Goods £2*
Richard Topsham	*Goods £2*
John Topsham	*Goods £2*
Hugh Topsham	*Wages £1*

in *Monkyn Bockelond* and, in the adjoining parish of *Whytchurche*,

John Topsham	*Goods £3*.

Although the surname *Topsham* does occur in Devonshire (though not elsewhere in these assessments), it does not appear in the Buckland Monachorum parish registers, which start just fourteen years after the date of this lay subsidy. However, the Tapsons were already well-established

*A. ERSKINE(Ed): The Devonshire Lay Subsidy of 1332, Devon & Cornwall Record Society 1969

†T.L. STOATE(Ed): Devon Lay Subsidy Rolls 1524-7, Pub. by T.L. Stoate, 1979

in the parish and, in particular, Tapsons with the same forenames, a Hugh, a Richard, two Johns, a William and a Thomas, were all buried in the period between February 1542/3 and August 1557; it is possible that a Philip was buried before the parish registers were started, for the earliest recorded burial of a Philip does not occur until 1597.

One has to conclude that these tax assessments for Buckland Monachorum probably refer to members of the Tapson family; if so, the fact that no similar name appears elsewhere in these returns for the county, except for the one occurrence in Whitchurch, adds weight to the evidence of parish registers that the Tapson name may have originated in Buckland Monachorum. As already noted (page 11) the Tapson name does not appear in the Whitchurch parish register for the Sixteenth Century, neither does the name *Topsham*, so it seems likely that the *John Topsham* (or *Tapson*) who paid tax in that parish was a sojourner there, having his children baptized, and being himself buried, in the parish church of Buckland Monachorum.

No Buckland Monachorum manor court roll exists later than those of 1602 and 1603, from which extracts have been quoted (page 12), but a few earlier ones (WDRO 70/27 and 70/28) have survived, and in most of these the name *Topsham* appears (but not the name *Tapson*). These early rolls are not very legible and the Mediæval Latin is even more abbreviated than usual, so the following extracts provide as accurate a transcription (with abbreviated words expanded) as possible:

16 Oct 1445
Thomas Bryan queritur de Johanne Beare Calfre Lakeman Johanne Topsham Senior Thome Threler et Johanne Page de placito transgressionis qui non dumtaxit(?) attachiantur ideo attachiantur
[Thomas Bryan brings a complaint against John Beare, Calfer Lakeman, John Topsham Sen., Thomas Threler and John Page on a plea of trespass, who are not yet(?) attached; so they are now attached.]

11 Nov 1445
Johannes Topsham queritur de Johanne Pete de placito debiti et modo loquela inde remanet(?) usque proximam(?) curiam(?)
[John Topsham brings a complaint against John Pete on a plea of debt, and now the case therefore is deferred(?) to the next(?) court(?).]
Johannes Topsham queritur de eodem Johanne de placito transgressionis qui non attachiatur ideo attachiatur
[John Topsham complains of the same John on a plea of trespass, who is not attached; so he is now attached.]
Tastator presentat quod Thomas Lakeman j vi d Johannes Topsham Junior j vi d ..... (further names) ..... *brasiaverunt et inde fregerunt assisam ideo ipsi in misericordia*
[The (ale-) taster presents that Thomas Lakeman, once, (fined) 6d, John Topsham Junior, once, (fined) 6d, ... (further names) ..... have brewed ale and thus have broken the assize; therefore they themselves are in mercy.]
Judus Thomas queritur de Johanne Beare Johanne Topsham Senior Thome Threler et Johanne Page de placito transgressionis qui non attachiantur ideo attachiantur
[Judus Thomas makes a complaint about John Beare, John Topsham Senior, Thomas Threler and John Page on a plea of trespass, who are not attached; so now they are attached.]

10 Sep 1537
A list of names, and fines imposed, includes *Johannes Topyssam iij d* for failure to be in court.

23 May 1538
Johannes Toppyssam iij d, again fined for the same reason.

21 Aug 1538
Johannes Toppyssam j vi d et Robertus Carter j vi d quia brasiatores sunt
[John Toppyssam, once, (fined) 6d and Robert Carter, once, (fined) 6d because they are brewers.]

An explanation of two legal terms used in the manor court proceedings may prove useful. *Attachment* was a writ to place a person under constraint or to seize some of his assets pending his attendance at court. An *assize* was an ordinance regulating the weights, measures, prices and quality of certain basic commodities like, as in these proceedings, beer.

The 1543-5 Subsidies. The 1543-5 lay subsidies were granted by Parliament to King Henry VIII to enable him to continue the war against Scotland. This tax, which was elaborately graduated, was paid in the Autumn of each of these three years on two categories: on income from Land, fees, annuities, etc.; and on the capital value of Goods. The tax on wages was dropped. The legibility of these rolls is not good; T. L. Stoate* uses a combination of the lists for the three years and also the 1546 anticipation.

There is no entry for a Tapson in the 1543-5 assessments; however, names which look like

John Stapssam	*Goods £6*
John Stapsyn	*Goods £1*
Richard Stapssyn	*Goods £5*
John Stapssyn	*Goods £7*
John Stapssyn	*Goods £3*
Thomas Stapssyn	*Goods £2*

are listed under *Bokelond* parish (Buckland Monachorum) and

William Tapsam	*Goods £1*

under *Samford Penye* (Sampford Spiney, one of the eight parishes adjoining Buckland Monachorum). Both of these parishes are in Roborough hundred, for which Stoate uses the 1545 assessment (PRO E179/98/265); in the 1546 anticipation *John Stapssam* becomes ..... *Tapsam*. No other similar-sounding name appears elsewhere in the Devonshire assessments.

There is no entry in the Buckland Monachorum parish registers for any of these names, so it seems probable that these tax-payers are all members of the Tapson family. Possibly Richard, Thomas and one of the Johns are the same people who were paying tax in 1524-5 (and even William too, having perhaps moved in the meantime to Sampford Spiney). Hugh and Philip are no longer tax-payers; a Hugh Tapson was buried in 1542 and, as already mentioned (page 14), it seems likely that a Philip Tapson was buried before the parish registers began in 1538. A glance at the Buckland Monachorum register reveals a superabundance of John Tapsons, which would account for the three extra Johns who have now become tax-payers (and might include the John Tapson who was in Whitchurch parish at the time of the 1524-5 assessments). The tax assessors were usually local men of good standing who would have spelt the names as they heard them pronounced; it seems probable that the soft Devonshire accent was the cause of the intrusive *S* in front of the names.

The 1581 Subsidy. The 1581 returns for Devonshire are complete except for four parishes in Black Torrington Hundred, which are illegible; these T. L. Stoate† replaced by the 1592 return. The other returns of this period are very incomplete, and contain no return from Roborough hundred. The subsidy was spread over two years, the assessment to take place in May 1581 and September 1582. The rate for the first payment was 2s 8d in the pound on Land and 1s 8d in the pound on Goods, and for the second payment 1s 4d and 1s respectively.

The only Devonshire Tapsons recorded as having paid tax in 1581 were all living in Buckland Monachorum parish (PRO E179/100/384). Their names, together with their assessments, are as follows:

William Tapson	*Goods £3*
Richard Tapsen	*Goods £4*
John Tapson de Heale	*Goods £3.*

John Tapson de Heale was buried on 8 August 1584 (page 6). No other person with a similar-sounding name is listed in Devonshire.

*T.L. STOATE(Ed): Devon Lay Subsidy Rolls 1543-5, Pub. by T.L. Stoate, 1986

†T.L. STOATE(Ed): Devon Taxes 1581-1660, Pub. by T.L. Stoate, 1988

1.7 FURTHER THOUGHTS ON THE TAPSON NAME

It is curious that the name *Topsham* (or *Toppyssam*) occurs frequently in both the 1524-5 lay subsidy returns for Buckland Monachorum and in the 1445, 1537 and 1538 manor court rolls, whilst the *Tapson* name does not occur at all; yet by 1542, only four years after the latest of these manor court rolls, and then regularly and frequently thereafter, the parish registers record the name *Tapson* but not *Topsham*. It is difficult to believe that until 1538 the parish was inhabited by lots of Topshams and no Tapsons, but from 1542 onwards by lots of Tapsons and no Topshams, unless they were members of one and the same family. The implication must be that the writers of the lay subsidy returns and of the manor court rolls all spelt the *Tapson* name in the way they thought they heard it pronounced — as *Topsham* or *Toppyssam* — just as the writers of the later lay subsidy assessments of 1543-5 used the spellings *Tapsam, Stapssam* or *Stapssyn*, and the writer of the manor court rolls of 1602 and 1603 the spelling *Tapsham* (page 12). Their difficulties would not have been lessened by the Devonshire accent which was then, as it still is, very broad, a fact confirmed by the Seventeenth-Century writer John Aubrey. In his *Brief Lives*, a collection of biographical sketches, Aubrey writes of Sir Walter Rayleigh (born about 1552, executed in 1618) that

> *Old Sir Thomas Malett, one of the Justices of the King's bench "tempore Caroli I et II", knew Sir Walter, and I have heard him say, that notwithstanding his so great Mastership in style and his conversation with the learnedest and politest persons, yet he spake broad Devonshire to his dying day.*

So if, as seems to be the inevitable conclusion, these names do indeed all refer to members of the Tapson family, then we have evidence that the Tapsons were already flourishing in Buckland Monachorum as early as 1445. There remains, however, one possibility which cannot be entirely disregarded: that the family name might originally have been *Topsham*. The parish of Topsham, immediately to the south-east of the city of Exeter, appears as *Toppeshamme* in the Domesday Book of 1086; it is said to mean *Topp's ham*, *ham* being the Old English word meaning a dwelling place.* A Roger Toppe was mentioned in the Gloucestershire Pipe Rolls of 1196, and the surname *Topp* frequently appears in the early parish registers for Devonshire. Reaney *(op. cit.)* notes that a Richard de Toppesham was recorded in 1262. It could be that the ancestors of the earliest recorded members of our family in Buckland Monachorum had also come from, and taken their name from, the parish of Topsham. It is easy to see how the spelling *Toppyssam* might have been derived from *Toppesham*, bearing in mind the Devonians' habit of dropping their *h*'s. However, it is not clear how *Top* might have changed into *Tap*: in broad Devonshire dialect the *e* sound is regularly replaced by an *i* sound, so that, for example, *been* is often written as *bin, byn* or *bynne*, spellings we shall meet below and in later pages of this book; but the *o* and the *a* vowel-sounds are not normally interchanged.• Even so, people who are known beyond doubt to be members of the Tapson family sometimes have their name spelt in parish registers and other documents as *Topson* (e.g. pages 25, 35) and even *Topsham* (e.g. pages 36, 70 and 290, the last occurring as late as the 1841 census), as well as *Tapsham* (e.g. page 82). So we are left in doubt as to whether we are descendants of *Tapp*, or whether our forebears hailed from Topsham, the change of name to Tapson being due to the spelling adopted in the earliest parish register by the vicars of Buckland Monachorum. Nevertheless, it remains true that the *Tapson* name probably originated in, or at least close to, Buckland Monachorum.

A further variation in the family name is to be found in *The Receivers' Book of Accounts No II* (WDRO W131) for Plymouth for the year 1564-5, which deals with the accounts relating to the building of the Guildhall. Under the heading *Here folowithe suche Costes Charges and paiements of money as have byn paied out and done* are listed the following:

Item paied to Willm Tabson for vj daies		*ij s*	*vj d*
Item payed to Willm Tabson for ij daies			*xiiij d*
Item to John Tapson for makinge of xij pillers	*iij li*	*xiij s*	*iiij d*
Item paied to hym for makinge of a C perche of walle at xiiij d the perche	*v li*	*xvj s*	*viij d*
Item payed to Willm Tabson for vj dayes		*iij s*	
Item payed to John Tabson for ij daies			*xij d*

*E. EKWALL: English Place-Names O.U.P. 1936
•See Appendix VI (Addenda).

1.8 SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY TAPSONS

In one item of the Receivers' accounts John's name is clearly spelt *Tapson*; elsewhere the replacement of *p* by *b* is easily accounted for by the similarity of the two labial sounds. Although William and John were working in Plymouth, which is about nine miles from Buckland Monachorum, there is no evidence of their having settled or raised families there. They were craftsmen brought in to work on an important project in the borough (for it was not yet a city): John is recorded as having made 12 pillars and 100 perch of wall. [A *perch* was 5½ yards. At 14d per perch, his wages would indeed amount to £5 16s 8d.] The Tapsons were moving around, but their homes remained in or close to Buckland Monachorum during most of the Sixteenth Century. However, as that century drew to a close one John Tapson got himself baptized at Plymouth on 10 June 1593 (page 35), a very venturesome infant! And during the course of the Seventeenth Century Tapsons were to be found even further afield, including two brothers working in France (page 51) and others reaching London.

The city of Exeter, just over 30 miles from Buckland Monachorum, was the setting for the marriages in July 1631 and February 1632/3 respectively of Agnes Tapson and of Nicholas Tapson. However, certainly in the case of Nicholas (page 110) and probably also that of Agnes (Appendix I), neither the bride nor the groom resided in Exeter, but much nearer to Buckland Monachorum; the cathedral city and county town of Devonshire was merely the venue for society weddings. It must also be remembered that weddings often took place in the bride's parish, so that the marriage entry of a Tapson groom in a parish register does not necessarily imply that he normally resided in that parish. Available evidence indicates that throughout the Seventeenth Century the Tapsons, with only a few exceptions, were actually making their homes and bringing up their families in Devonshire and in Cornwall within a radius of about 20 miles from Buckland Monachorum.

Sir Francis Drake died childless and Buckland Abbey passed to his brother Thomas. [It remained in Thomas's family until 1942,• and is now a museum run by the National Trust.] So links with the capital would have been maintained during the Seventeenth Century and, in spite of its apparent remoteness, the little village of Buckland Monachorum would have witnessed much coming and going between London, the important city of Exeter, and the busy port of Plymouth, as is borne out by the early introduction of regular stage-coach services connecting them. Thus* as early as April 1658 the *Mercurius Politicus* carried an advertisement for a coach service to begin on the 26th of that month from *The George Inn*, Aldersgate Street Without:

> *On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays to Salisbury in two days for XXs, Blandford and Dorchester in two days and a half for XXXs, Burput in three days for XXXs, and Exmaster, Hunnington, and Exeter in four days for XLs.*

Every Monday and Wednesday others were to set out for *Ockington and Plimouth for Ls*. The same advertisement also gave details of a summer service which ran from *The George Inn*, Holborn Bridge, to *Salisbury, Blandford, Exmaster, Hunnington, Exeter, Ockington, Plimouth and Cornwal*. [*Burput, Exmaster, Hunnington*, *Ockington* are presumably *Bridport, Axminster, Honiton*, *Okehampton*.]

The distance by this route from London to Exeter was some 175 miles, so a price had to be paid for speed (twopence three-farthings a mile, a farthing being ¼ of a penny), although the optimistic time of 4 days was probably little more than slick advertising: by 1673 the time is put at 8 days in summer, 10 days in winter. The peasantry unable to afford these prices would travel by one of the carriers' waggons which were already plying this route, either sitting among the goods or walking alongside the slow-moving waggon and sleeping overnight underneath the waggon or in the hayloft of a staging inn. The able-bodied gentry, on the other hand, would ride horseback, the post-road to the naval dockyard at Plymouth having been established in the reign of King Henry VIII; originally intended for despatch-riders on affairs of state, the post-horses, which were changed about every ten miles, became available for other travellers early in the Seventeenth Century and a charge in 1617 of twopence halfpenny a mile is recorded. The Tapsons who began to arrive in London during the Seventeenth Century probably made the long, hazardous and uncomfortable journey by one or other of these means, or else by ship from Plymouth either as seamen or as fare-paying passengers.

*C.G. HARPER Stage Coach and Mail (2 Vol) London Chapman 1903

•See Appendix VI (Addenda).

1.9 THE PROTESTATION OATH

In 1641 some important national events were taking place which were to lead to the Civil War, the main phase of which occurred from 1642 to 1646. Because of fears of a plot, in which the King was thought to be involved, to arrange for the escape from the Tower of the Earl of Strafford by using the army to overawe Parliament, members of the House of Commons signed the following oath on 3 May 1641 and the Protestant peers signed it the following day:

> *I, A. B., do in the presence of Almighty God, promise, vow and protest to maintain and defend as far as I lawfully may, with my Life, Power and Estate, the true reformed Protestant Religion expressed in the Doctrine of the Church of England, against all Popery and Popish Innovations within the Realm, contrary to the said Doctrine; and according to the Duty of my Allegiance I will maintain and defend His Majesty's Royal Person, Honour and Estate as also the Power and Privileges of Parliament, the Lawful Rights and Liberties of the subjects, and every Person that maketh this Protestation, in whatsoever he shall do in the lawful pursuance of the same; and to my power, and as far as I lawfully may, I will oppose and by all good Ways and Means endeavour to bring condign Punishment on all such as shall by Force, Practice, Counsels, Plots, Conspiracies or otherwise do anything to the contrary in this present Protestation contained; and further that I shall, in all just and honourable ways, endeavour to preserve the Union and Peace betwixt the Three Kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland; and neither for Hope, Fear nor other Respect, shall relinquish this Promise, Vow and Protestation.*

The House of Lords rejected a Bill which would have imposed on all Englishmen the obligation of signing the Oath, but on 30 July the Commons passed a resolution that all who refused to sign were unfit to hold office in Church or State. On 4 January 1641/2 King Charles tried to arrest five Members of Parliament; so the Protestation was sent out to the County Sheriffs for distribution to every parish. The text was read out in the churches and every man aged 18 or over was required to take the oath; lists were made of all who signed (or made their marks), of all who refused to sign and of all who, through sickness or absence, were unable to sign. Generally the returns were filled in with great care and speedily despatched to Parliament. On 8 March 1641/2 a Parliamentary Committee was instructed to receive the reports and consider what should be done about those who refused to sign, but no further action was taken. Surviving returns are in the *Papers of the House of Lords,1642*, at the House of Lords Record Office, and constitute the only comprehensive census of names, albeit of adult males only, before the census of 1841.

Returns from the 204 Cornish* parishes survive except for the four parishes of Jacobstow, St. Austell, Truro and St. Neot, which are completely missing; they list 30,653 males (and the women as well in the two parishes of St. Mabyn and St. Tudy). The Devonshire† returns survive for 412 parishes out of the 468 and list 63,370 males. In Devonshire the great majority of the missing parishes are in the south-east corner of the County, between Exeter and the Dorset border. The hundreds of Axminster, East Budleigh and Ottery St. Mary are completely missing and only the return for Colyton parish survives out of the Colyton hundred, and only the returns for the parishes of Broad Clyst and Buttersleigh out of the Cliston hundred. These five hundreds account for 48 of the 56 missing parishes.

The number of recusants in Cornwall was 48, nearly half of them in Ryder hundred due to the presence and influence of the Arundell family. In Cornwall it is practically always stated that the individual refused to sign; in Devonshire the more usual phrase is *the following did not sign*, so some might not have been recusants. The following is a list of every reference to a Tapson in the surviving returns from Cornwall and Devonshire, distances of the parishes from the village of Buckland Monachorum being shown in parentheses. The parish of St. Ive (pronounced *Eve*) in Cornwall must not be confused with the well-known holiday resort of St. Ives, which is in the south-west of the county. The parishes of Weston Peverel, Compton Gifford, East Stonehouse, Plymouth St. Andrew, and Plymouth Charles the Martyr, seem to have been included under *Plymouth*.

*T.L. STOATE(Ed): The Cornwall Protestation Returns 1641 (Transcribed Glencross & Douch), Pub by T.L. Stoate, 1974

†A.J. HOWARD & T.L. STOATE(Eds): The Devon Protestation Returns 1641, Pub. by T.L. Stoate, 1973

Often, if there was no dispute about how the estate was to be dealt with, wills have remained unproved or letters of administration have not been applied for. Also, before 1882 a married woman could not normally make a will without the consent of her husband, because her property was considered to be his. Thus the total number of recorded wills or administrations covers only a small proportion of the population.

Since 11 January 1858 wills and administrations in England and Wales have been the responsibility of civil probate courts. Before that date most probate matters were dealt with in about 100 major ecclesiastical courts in England and Wales. Jurisdiction might be granted in an Archdeacon's Court (if all the property of the deceased lay within his Archdeaconry), in a Bishop's Court (if all the property lay within his Diocese), in the Prerogative Court of the Archbishop of York (if all the property lay within his Province), or in the Prerogative Court of the Archbishop of Canterbury (wherever the property lay). Persons willing to pay the higher fees were not precluded from obtaining probate in higher courts than the extent of the property of the deceased demanded. There were also over 200 smaller *peculiar* courts, mostly arising from properties of church dignitaries which lay in the diocese of another bishop. In the Diocese of Exeter, which until the Nineteenth Century embraced the whole of Cornwall and Devonshire, the six principal probate courts were

The Principal Registry of the Bishop of Exeter,
The Consistory Court of the Bishop of Exeter,
The Archidiaconal Courts of Exeter, Barnstaple, Totnes and Cornwall,

the archidiaconal courts having jurisdiction over each of the four archdeaconries into which the diocese was divided; there were also nine small peculiar courts.

The really bad news about tracing one's family to Devonshire or Cornwall is that all the probate records of the ecclesiastical courts within the Diocese of Exeter, except those of the Archidiaconal Court of Cornwall, had been deposited at the Probate Registry in Exeter when it was destroyed by enemy action in 1942. Thus the only extant Devonshire and Cornwall wills proved before 1858 (when civil probate courts replaced the ecclesiastical courts) are those proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury or in the Archidiaconal Court of Cornwall. Since south-west Devon lies in the Archdeaconry of Totnes, most of the early Tapson wills would have been proved in that Archidiaconal Court, and so are lost for ever. However, before their destruction in 1942 many of the Diocese of Exeter probate records prior to 1800 had been indexed by the British Record Society, and those of the Archidiaconal Court of Barnstaple by J.J. Beckerlegge; but none of these indexes covers the Archidiaconal Court of Totnes or the nine peculiar courts within the diocese. The following is a list of Tapson probate records so indexed; of these, only the two Archidiaconal Court of Cornwall wills survive (pages 81, 84), although a copy exists of the 1750 will of Robert Tapson (page 92):

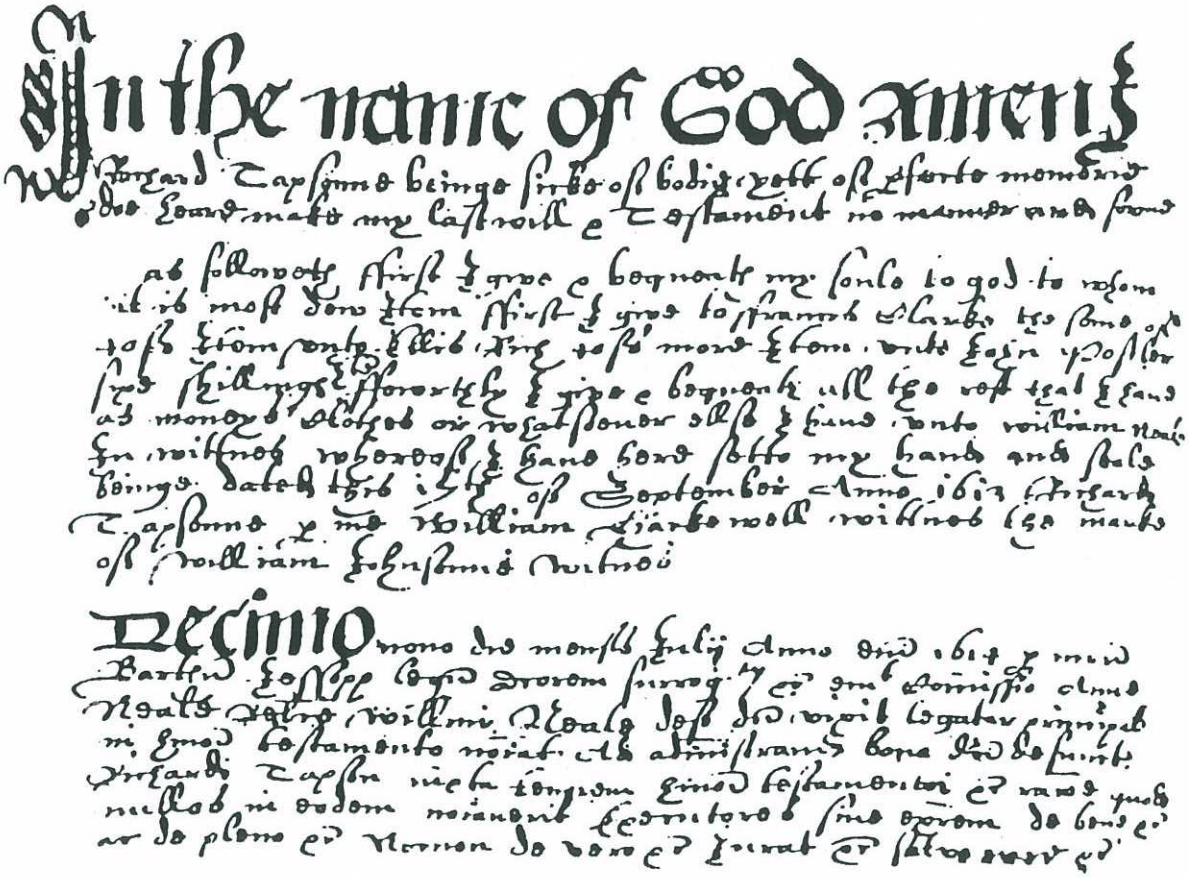
Date	Name	Place (and miles from Buckland M.)		Type (Court)	
1608	William Tapson	Buckland Monachorum, Devon	(0)	Admon	(1,2)
1666	Agnes Tapson	St. Stephens by Saltash, Cornwall	(8)	Will	(3)
1680	William Tapson	Buckland Monachorum, Devon	(0)	Will	(1)
1682	Robert Tapson	Buckland Monachorum, Devon	(0)	Admon	(1)
1688	Robert Tapson	Calstock, Cornwall	(4)	Will	(3)
1715	Robert Tapson	Bratton Clovelly, Devon	(15)	Will	(1)
1748	Robert Tapson, esq	Ingsdon, Devon	(18)	Admon	(1)
1750	Robert Tapson	Ilsington, Devon	(18)	Admon	(1)
1750	Robert Tapson, clerk	Ingsdon, Devon	(18)	Will	(1)
1766	John Tapson	Bickleigh (or Plymouth), Devon	(4)	Admon	(1)
1777	James Tapson	South Petherwin, Cornwall	(14)	Will	(2)
1786	Hester Tapson	South Petherwin, Cornwall	(14)	Will	(2)

Courts
1. PRINCIPAL REGISTRY OF THE BISHOP OF EXETER
2. CONSISTORY COURT OF THE BISHOP OF EXETER
3. CONNOTORIAL ARCHIDIACONAL COURT OF CORNWALL

1.12 SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY PROBATE RECORDS

Apart from the two Cornwall wills of 1666 (page 81) and 1688 (page 84), the only Seventeenth-Century Tapson probate records to survive are two wills (pages 34, 82) and four administrations (pages 24, 25), all recorded in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, and a will (invalid) recorded in the Commissary Court of London. A copy of the 1613 will of a Richard Tapson in the Probate Record Book of this latter court (GL MS9171/22 Fo. 346) is the earliest Tapson probate record to survive. Since it is written in *secretary hand*, the script normally used in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, a transcription is given, but with the abbreviations of the original written out in full. By the end of the Seventeenth Century secretary hand was giving place to italic hand, much more like modern handwriting. A word-by-word translation of the much-abbreviated Latin text is also included, with punctuation inserted and with the gaps caused by the seven occurrences of *etcetera* filled in, the omitted words appearing in parentheses. It will be observed that the Mediæval Latin differs from Classical Latin both in spelling (e.g. *relicte* for *relictae, racione* for *ratione*) and in syntax.

The Will of Richard Tapson dated 15 September 1613



IN THE NAME OF GOD AMEN / I Richard Tapsonne beinge sicke of bodie yett of perfecte memorie / doe heare make my last will and Testament in manner and forme / as followeth First I give and bequeath my soule to god to whom / it is most dew Item First I give to Francis Clarke the some of / 40 shillings Item unto Ellis Rich 40 shillings more Item unto John Postler / five shillings Item Fowrthly I give and bequeath all the rest that I have / as moneye Clothes or whatsoever ellse I have unto William Neate / In wittnes whereof I have here sette my hand and seale / beinge dated this 15th of September Anno 1613 Richard / Tapsonne presence William Lackewell wittnes the marke / of William Johnsonne witnes

DECIMO nono die mensis Julii Anno Domini 1614 per magistrum Bartholomeum Jessopp legum doctorem surrogatum (venerabilis viri magistri Thome Ridley legum etiam doctoris commissarii generalis) emanavit commissio Anne Neate relicte Willimi Neate defuncti dum vixit legatarius principalis in hujusmodi testamento nominatus Ad administrandum bona dicti defuncti Richardi Tapson juxta tenorem hujusmodi testamenti racione quod nullos in eodem nominaverit Executores sive executorem de bene (et fideliter administrando) ac de pleno (inventario exhibendo) Necnon de vero (compoto reddendo Ad Sancta Dei Evangelia) Jurato (in debita juris forma) salvo jure (cujuscumque)

[TRANSLATION On the nineteenth day of the month of July in the year of our Lord 1614, by master Bartholomew Jessopp, of laws doctor surrogate (of the venerable man master Thomas Ridley, of laws doctor and moreover commissary general), went forth a commission to Anne Neate, relict of William Neate deceased, while he lived the principal legatee named in this will, to administer the goods of the said deceased, Richard Tapson, according to the tenor of this will, by reason that none in the same did he name as Executors or executor, for well (and faithfully administering) and for a full (inventory presenting), and also for a true (account rendering, on the holy of God Gospels) being sworn (in due form of law), saving only the rights (of whomsoever).]

The Latin text at the foot of Richard's will is not a grant of probate, since he omitted to nominate an executor for his will; it is, rather, an act of administration, the copy of which in the Administrations Act Book of the Commissary Court (GL MS9168/16 Fo. 203) also includes the words:

nuper (de) parochie Sancti Dunstani in Occidente (in) Comitatu London

[late of the parish of St. Dunstan in the West in the County of London]

which tells us that, before his death, Richard was living in the Fleet Street area of the City. There is, however, no burial entry for Richard at St. Dunstan in the West between the date of the will and the date of probate.

It is perhaps significant that Richard does not seem to have had any family near him during his illness; his bequests appear to be to four of his friends, a situation consistent with that of a young man far from home. Perhaps he had come up from Devonshire hoping to make his fortune in the capital, but fell instead an untimely victim to some foul and horrible disease, a grim lesson to any other young man from home hankering after the excitement of the big city. It is interesting to observe that William Neate was also dead by the time the will was proved; this suggests the possibility of some epidemic disease. If an epidemic was responsible for the two deaths, it is unlikely to have been the bubonic plague,* which in Seventeenth-Century London peaked in 1603 (estimated 33,347 deaths due to the plague), 1625 (41,313 plague deaths recorded), 1636 (10,400 plague deaths recorded) and 1665 (the Great Plague with 68,596 recorded deaths), but from which there are no deaths recorded between 1610 and 1625. More likely it would have been smallpox, which became prominent in Britain in the Seventeenth Century, with 1614 being the worst year all over Europe and the East. Or possibly it might have been that unmentionable disease known euphemistically throughout Europe as the *French pox* (except in France where it was attributed to the Spanish), which reached epidemic proportions in Europe for almost thirty years from 1494 and became widely prevalent again in England during the reign of James I (1603-25).

The Act of Administration of Richard's estate required Anne Neate to present an inventory of his possessions. This inventory does not survive, but when one is found it can provide interesting information. Inventories exist for the estates of two seamen, a Robert Tapson and another Richard Tapson, Letters of Administration being granted in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury (PRO PROB6/57 Fo.139, 58 Fo.13). Again the abbreviated words of the Acts of Administration are expanded as accurately as possible, although the intended word-endings are not always obvious since the Dog Latin does not too closely conform with Classical syntax. This is particularly apparent in the introduction of *le*, from the French, for a word which in Classical Latin does not exist, in the use of *de* in the sense in which it would be used in French, and in expressions such as *defuncti habentis* which are merely word-for-word translations of the corresponding English expressions.

*C.CREIGHTON: A History of Epidemics in Britain London Frank Cass 1894 Repr 1965

Administration of the Estate of Robert Tapson dated 18 November 1682

Robertus Tapson Decimo Octavo die Emanavit Commissio Mariæ Tapson (uxori Richardi Tapson Jam in partibus transmarinis commorantis) Consobrini et proprii Consanguinei Roberti Tapson nuper de Plymouth in Comitatu Devon sed in Nave vocata Le Adventure Frigott in partibus transmarinis Cælibis defuncti habentis etc Ad Administrandum bona Jura et Credita dicti defuncti durante absentia et ad usum et commodum dicti Richardi Tapson Consobrini prædicti de bene etc Jurato

[TRANSLATION Robert Tapson On the Eighteenth day Went forth a Commission to Mary Tapson (wife of Richard Tapson Now sojourning in foreign parts) a Cousin and proper Blood-relative of Robert Tapson formerly of Plymouth in County Devon but in the Ship called The Adventure, Frigate, having died in foreign parts, a Bachelor, etc. To Administer the Sworn and Certified goods of the said deceased during the absence and for the use and benefit of the said Richard Tapson, Cousin aforesaid, for well etc. Being sworn]

Robert's estate was valued at £17. The inventory which produced this figure (PRO PROB4/24052) was neatly signed by Mary Tapson herself. It begins

A true and perfect inventory of all and singular the goods of Robert Tapson Late of Plymouth in the County of Devon Batchelor but dying at Sea in the Ship called the Adventure

The two items listed in the inventory were *wareing apparrell* valued at £1 and pay due for *18 months aboard the Adventure at 18s per month £16 3s.* Bearing in mind that there were 20 shillings to the pound, back pay should have amounted to £16 4s, but there was probably some good reason for the deduction of a shilling (page 29). The inventory was also dated 18 November 1682.

Administration of the Estate of Richard Tapson dated 5 February 1682/3

Richardus Tapson Quinto die emanavit Commissio Mariæ Tapson Relictæ Richardi Tapson nuper parochiæ Sanctæ Mariæ Matfellan att Whitchapple in Comitatu Middlesex sed in Nave vocata le Reserve in partibus transmarinis defuncti habentis etc ad administrandum bona Jura et Credita dicti defuncti de bene etc Jurato

[TRANSLATION Richard Tapson On the Fifth day went forth a Commission to Mary Tapson, the Relict of Richard Tapson, late of the parish of St. Mary Matfellan at Whitchapple in County Middlesex but in the Ship called the Reserve having died in foreign parts etc., to administer the Sworn and Certified goods of the said deceased for well etc. Being sworn]

Whitechapel, then in the county of Middlesex, is now the start of the *East End* of London. Richard's estate was valued at £21; the undated inventory (PRO PROB4/25969) is difficult to read, but makes it clear that Richard died at or beyond the sea. Although Richard had obviously made his home near the Port of London, the act of administration does not disclose his place of birth. However, since it seems highly likely that Richard's wife, Mary, was the same Mary Tapson who signed the inventory of Robert's estate, a Devonshire origin for Richard may be assumed, for his *cousin* Robert was described as *nuper de Plymouth*. In spite of the hardships and dangers of a sailor's life, it is not surprising that some of the early Tapsons should have been attracted to the sea, living as they did so close to Plymouth, which had retained its importance in the nation's history, witnessing among other notable events the departure in 1620 of the *Mayflower* carrying the Pilgrim Fathers to America.

It is likely that Mary was living at Whitechapel when she prepared the inventory of Robert's effects, so these must have been returned to London by the naval authorities. The two *cousins* had originally both sailed out of Deptford (pages 28, 29), but on different ships. Only eleven weeks separate the two acts of administration. The marriage in the City of London church of St. James, Duke Place (GL):

14 June 1681 Richard Tapson Br & Mary Knight Spr William Hodges Fa,

could well have been that of the ill-fated Richard who died at sea and the prematurely-widowed Mary. [At the wedding the rôle of *William Hodges Fa* may have been to give away the bride; all the marriage entries in the register of St. James at this period include a name, the surname usually different from that of the bride, followed by *Fa* or *Fr* - perhaps a surrogate father?]

The other two of the four surviving Seventeenth Century P.C.C. administrations (page 22) are also of seamen who died at sea, though there is no evidence that they reached London.

Administration of the Estate of Thomas Tapson dated 6 December 1689

Thomas Tapson Sexto die Emanavit Commissio Elizabethæ Tapson Solutæ Sorori naturali et legitimæ Thomæ Tapson nuper de Stonehouse in Comitatu Devon sed in nave le Greenwich in servicio regio super alto mari Cælibis defuncti habentis etc Ad Administrandum bona jura et credita dicti defuncti de bene etc Jurato

[TRANSLATION Thomas Tapson On the Sixth day Went forth a Commission to Elizabeth Tapson, the only natural and lawful sister of Thomas Tapson, late of Stonehouse in County Devon but in the ship the Greenwich in royal service on the high sea having died, a Bachelor, etc. To Administer the sworn and certified goods of the said deceased for well etc. Being sworn]

Administration of the Estate of John Tapson dated 24 September 1697

Johannes Tapson Vicesimo fortio die emanavit Commissio Thomæ Tapson fratri naturali et legitimo Johannis Tapson nuper in nave regia le Bredah Cælibis defuncti habentis etc ad administrandum bona jura et credita dicti defuncti de bene etc Jurato

[TRANSLATION John Tapson On the Twenty-fourth day went forth a Commission to Thomas Tapson, the natural and lawful brother of John Tapson, late in the royal ship the Bredah having died, a Bachelor, etc. To administer the sworn and certified goods of the said deceased for well etc. Being sworn]

The first of these two administrations (PRO PROB6/65 Fo. 142) makes it clear that Thomas came from Stonehouse, a parish adjoining Plymouth, but the second (PRO PROB6/73 Fo. 97) does not reveal John's home. However, John must surely be the *John Topson* named in another P.C.C. administration of the previous year (PRO PROB6/72 Fo. 63):

Administration of the Estate of John Topson dated 17 June 1696

Johannes Topson Decimo Septimo die emanavit Commissio Waltero Topson patri naturali et legitimo Johannis Topson nuper de Plymouth in Comitatu Devon sed in nave regia le Bredah Cælibis defuncti habentis etc ad admininstrandum bona etc dicti defuncti de bene etc Jurato

[TRANSLATION John Topson On the Seventeenth day went forth a Commission to Walter Topson the natural and lawful father of John Topson, late of Plymouth in County Devon but in the royal ship the Bredah having died, a Bachelor, etc. To administer the goods etc. of the said deceased for well etc. Being Sworn]

So it seems that John also hailed from Plymouth; perhaps his father had died before he was able to dispose of the estate, or was for some other reason unable to discharge this function.

1.13 SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY NAVAL RECORDS

For further information about these four seamen, Robert, Richard, Thomas and John, it is necessary to search the records of the Royal Navy. As part of his thorough reorganization of the Admiralty during his time there (from 1660 to 1673 as Clerk of the Acts of the Navy and then, until early in 1689, as the powerful Secretary of the Admiralty) Samuel Pepys (1633 - 1703) directed that each naval officer's career details be kept in a single record, the only period before the 1840's during which this seems to have been done. Until 1860 each new command required a fresh commission, but a captain's seniority dated from his first commission. The same applied to a lieutenant, who required a fresh commission even if only to move up one position on the same ship — originally a lieutenant was a captain's deputy, but by the late Seventeenth Century larger ships could have up to nine lieutenants ranking as First, Second, Third, etc. in order of seniority.*

*N.A.M. RODGER: Naval Records for Genealogists H.M.S.O. 1988

One such Admiralty record (PRO ADM7/549), under the heading *A General List of all the Captains, that have served in the Royal Navy from the Restoration in 1660, shewing the Dates of their first Commissions as Captains to the Revolution in 1688*, includes the entry:

Name	*Date of First Commission*	*Ship*	*Time of Decease*
Tapson Richard	*10 Dec 1673*	*Mermaid*	*27 July 1678*

The date of death of this Richard rules out the possibility that he might have been Mary's husband, who died some years afterwards on the Reserve.

However, another Admiralty record (PRO ADM10/10), headed *Alphabetical List of Captains and Lieutenants from the Restoration in 1660 to the Revolution in 1688,* has the entries:

Tapson Rich^{d}	*2 L^{t}*	*Adventure*	*15 7ber 1670*	
	C^{n}	*Mermaid*	*9 Aug 1673*	
		Adventure	*12 Apr 1678*	*DD*
Tapson Rich^{d} Jun^{r}	*L^{t}*	*Adventure*	*15 Sep 1678*	*DD*

[7ber is September, the seventh month in the Julian Calendar. DD means *discharged dead*.] The affix *Junior* would seem to imply that the two Richards were father and son.

A third Admiralty record (PRO ADM10/15) entitled *A Register of all Commission Officers Serving his Majesty at the Seas between the yeares 1660 and 1685 collected from the Pay Books of the Shippes employed within that time* contains the entries:

Persons	*Shippes*	*Capt^{ns} or Lieu^{ts}*	*Entry*	*Discharge*	*Dead*
Tapson Richard Sen^{r}	*Adventure*	*L^{t}*	*12 Jun 72*	*9 Aug 73*	
	Mermaid	*C^{n}*	*10 Dec 73*	*28 May 74*	
	Adventure	*C^{n}*	*27 May 78*	*22 July 78*	*DD*
Tapson Richard Jun^{r}	*Adventure*	*L^{t}*	*17 Sep 78*	*23 Dec 80*	*DD*

The discrepancy in the date of promotion of Richard Tapson Senior from Second Lieutenant to Captain can perhaps be resolved by reference to the Treasurers' Pay Books. The entry for the Mermaid for its commission which *Began wages 1 Oct 1672, Ended wages 28 May 1674* (PRO ADM33/104) states that she was a Frigate, and contains the following items:

Time of Entry	*Name*	*Quality*	*Time of Discharge*	*Full Wages*	*Neat Wages*
Aug 10 Commission					
7ber 6 73	*Rich Tapson*	*Comand^{r}*		*87 - 12 - 0*	*87 - 12 - 0*
7ber 6 73	*Richard Topson*	*able*	*D 13 Jan 73*	*0 - 4 - 9*	————

So it would seem that Richard received his commission on 10 August 1673, but did not take command of the Mermaid until 6 September 1673.

A letter (PRO ADM106/285 Fo. 219) to the Navy Board from the Adventure, signed by *Richard Tapson,* was dated 5 September 1673, the day before he took command of the Mermaid:

May itt please your Honors

Itt is now 16 moneths that we have use the Westeren station without any considerable Supply of Stores, we are now altogether out of Stores as Cap^{t} Tagrwhitt formerly wrote to your Honors, and the Commissioner att Plymouth flatly denyes to supply to this day Comeing to anchor here we broke first our best boreer(?) cable and after we lett goe our sheate Anchor which likewise broke we are now left in a bad condition haveing neither Cables nor anchors nor, if putt to Sea, sailes or rigging to help us we haveing splitt our foresaile comeing in this morneing and the rest of our sailes being very badd, besides our boltspritt is sprung in two places which we fixed att sea butt to litle purpose. I desire your Honors would take this into consideration and order the shipp where she may be supplyed for itt is now almost three yeares since she was in a dock and neare four moneths since she was cleaned. I am

Your Honors most Faithfull and Humble Servant *Rich Tapson*

In this letter from Downs (an anchorage off the east coast of Kent protected by the Goodwin Sands) addressed *For the Right Honorable the principall officers and Commissioners of his Majesties Navy att the Navy Office in London*, Richard did not refer to himself as Captain. However, on 10 February 1673/4 he sent another letter (PRO ADM106/306 Fo. 1) to the Navy Board *from on board the Mermaid at the Spithead*, in which he is described as *Captain Richard Tapson:*

> *Honorable Sirs*
> *I most humbly beg the favour of your Honors to take Into Consideration my selfe with twenty one men that went with mee out of the adventure Into the Mermaid whos Ticketts I have sent to your honors together with my own Commission for the tyme I served as Lieutenant on board the adventure and humbly beg your Honors favour In the order for payment of my selfe and men: my orders being at present for portland Road* [perhaps the water off Weymouth in the lee of Portland Island, now Portland Harbour] *and Tapsom* [probably the port of Topsham on the river Exe (page 16)] *and to Call for all such ships as are bound for St Mallos and Give them safe Convoy to the sayed port and after that to Returne to Cruse In the Soundings: the most part of these men being west Country I beg your honors Directtions to plymouth which will be the port of shore watter as the 21 ticketts your Honors will Recave from Mr Andrew Gardiner purser of his Majesties ship Mermaid which I humbly beg your Honors tymly Rememberance of and Crave your Honors Leave to Rest Honorable Sirs*
> *Your honors most obeidient and humble servant Richard Tapson*

A man discharged from a ship before the ship was paid off received a *ticket* for his wages, encashable on board on the day the ship was paid off and thereafter at periodic recalls in the yard or at the Navy Pay Office in London. Richard was asking for special arrangements to be made for payment at Plymouth to men with tickets for service on the Adventure, among whom the Mermaid's purser listed

Rich Topson able Entered 8 July 72 Discharged 6 Sep 73

It is interesting that Richard Tapson Junior had joined the Adventure as an able seaman soon after his father (for such the elder Richard appears to be) became First Lieutenant on that ship, and transferred to the Mermaid on the day that his father assumed his new command, remaining aboard for four months no doubt under his father's ever-watchful eye.

Further letters to the Navy Board followed from *Captain Richard Tapson, Mermaid* (PRO ADM106/306). One, dated 27 February 1673/4 (Fo. 3), was from Plymouth, concerning some tickets for men and requiring blanks. Another, dated 25 April 1674 (Fo. 5), from Portsmouth, reported the arrival there of the ship, which was awaiting orders, and matters concerning some tickets. Another, dated 5 May 1674 (Fo. 7), also from Portsmouth, reported matters concerning tickets and gave a list of seamen; it included two printed tickets (Fo. 9, 10). One sentence in the letter of 25 April 1674 is of particular interest, since it clearly illustrates the insecurity of employment, even for an officer, in the days prior to the introduction in 1853 of continuous service engagements: *and now I expect farther orders, which if it may tend to my continuance in service I should be Really Thankfull*

Another Pay Book entry (PRO ADM33/125) is for the Adventure, also a Frigate, which *Began Rigging wages the 27th May 1678* [the day Captain Richard Tapson took command of her] *and Sea wages the 1st of June 1678 and Ended wages the 22 Janry 1682*. Items of interest are:

Time of Entry	*Name*	*Quality*	*Time of Discharge*	*Full Wages*	*Neat Wages*
	Richd Tapson	*Commandr*	*DD 22 Jul 78*	*Allowed on Mr Seymours List*	
Jun 4 78	*Richd Tapson*	*Marrs Mte*	*D 8 Sep 78*	*Allowed on Mr Seymours List*	
Sep 17 78	*Richd Tapson*	*Lieut*	*D 23 xber 80*	*Allowed on Mr Seymours List*	
Dec 1 78	*Tho: Tapson*	*ordry*	*D 9 Jan 78/9*	*1 - 7 - 2*	*1 - 5 - 8 pd MrsTopson*
Mar 8 78/9	*Tho: Tapson*	*Lieuts sert*	*D 11 Aug 81*	*29 - 9 - 0*	*27 - 18 - 0 pd MrsTopson 1 - 8 - 4*
Sep 18 79	*Robt Tapson*	*ord*	*DD 16 Sep 81*	*3 - 14 - 0*	*2 - 8 - 0 pd Mary Tapson 1 - 4 - 7*

Until 1713 H.M. ships ranked from 1 to 6; the Adventure was a Fourth Rate ship built in 1646, with a tonnage of 370, a crew of 160 and 40 guns. As well as the two *Commission* Oficers on the ship, Captain Richard Tapson and Lieutenant Samuel Ford, there were four *Warrant* Officers: the Master, who was the specialist in navigation and pilotage; the Purser, responsible for the issue of victuals, slops (clothes) and other consumable ship's stores; the Carpenter, responsible for the maintenance of the hull and masts of the ship; and the Gunner. Richard Tapson Junior started off as Master's Mate, that is, as an assistant to the Master, learning navigation from him prior to his first commission three months later as Lieutenant, also on the Adventure. Thomas Tapson began as an ordinary seaman, and then progressed to become Lieutenant's Servant, which was essentially an apprenticeship for an aspiring Commission Officer. Captain Richard Tapson had six Captain's Servants, a captain being allowed four Captain's Servants for every 100 men in his ship. By the end of this commissioning of the Adventure both Captain Richard Tapson and Robert Tapson were dead. Robert did not progress beyond the rating of Ordinary Seaman before his death; his was the first of the four P.C.C. Admons.

The second of the four P.C.C. Admons was that of the Richard Tapson who died on the Reserve, but Pay Books for the Reserve do not survive for that period. However, a List Book of Disposition of Ships (PRO ADM8/1) records that the Reserve began wages on 17 August 1681 at Deptford (where Richard presumably joined her) and then set sail as part of a *Turkey Convoy*; she was on the way home when Richard died. Further information about him can be gleaned from a letter found among the Bounty Papers (PRO ADM106/3023) in one of the two packets labelled *Misc*, which was written on behalf of his widow. It is labelled:

1683 Peticon Mary Tapson Widow

To the Right Honorable the principall Officers and Commissioners of his Majesties Navy
The humble peticon of Mary Tapson widdow
Sheweth
That your peticoners late husband Richard Tapson served his Majestie as Middshipm^{n} extra in his Majesties Ship the Reserve wherein he dyed And since his death Mr Dunbridge Chyrurgian [the chirurgeon, or surgeon] *of the said ship, (whom your peticoners husband had appointed Overseer of his Will) sold unto one Kidwell, then, and now, Gunner of the said Ship: 40: peeces of Dymete and other goods to the value of 10^{li} and now most unconsiably refuseth to paie your peticoner for the same, or give her anie acknowledgment under his hand for paiement hereafter And being now secure in his Majesties service at Portesmouth, the peticoner hath no remedy or power to recover her said just debt, unless your Honnors favourable assistance be in charity extended to her in this her great distress shee haveing verie litle maintenance left for her and her poore child*
Shee therefore most humbly beseecheth your Honnors to lay a Stop on the wages of the said Kidwell until he shall answear his unjust dealings to your peticoner whose pretences in the premisses being made clear before this honorable Board your Honnors may be pleased to mediate such a satisfaccon to your peticoner as to your Honnors wisdom and justice shalbe found meet
And your peticoner shalbe ever bound to pray etc

The letter is endorsed: *Mr Hah is hereby directed to lay a Stop on the Chirurgions Wages till iust satisfaction be given to the petioner*

Mary Tapson's petition states that her husband was serving as *Middshipm^{n} extra*. Whilst a *midshipman* then, as now, had not received his first commission, a *Midshipman Extraordinary* was a ranking established in 1676 to provide temporary sea-going berths for unemployed commissioned officers. Since there is no further record of service for the Richard Tapson appointed as Lieutenant on the Adventure on 17 September 1678, and since two Admiralty documents (page 26) indicate that he was dead by 1688, it seems reasonable to assume that he was the Midshipman Extraordinary who died on the Reserve, Mary's husband and a son of Captain Richard Tapson. We learn from Mary's petition that Richard Tapson Junior had fathered a child before his death.

We know from the third of the P.C.C. Admons that Thomas died on the Greenwich. A Pay Book (PRO ADM33/117) for the commissioning of that ship which *Began Sea Wages in the Downes the 12th day of Sept 1688 and Ended the 31st of July 1689* has the entry:

Time of Entry	Name	Quality	D/R	Time of Discharge	Whither	Slop Cloaths	Tobacco
15 Sep 1688	*Tho Tapson*	*ab*	*DD*	*31 July 89*	*at Sea*	*0 - 3 - 6*	*0 - 1 - 8*

Chest	Full Wages	Neat Wages	To whom paid
0 - 11 - 6	*13 - 14 - 5*	*12 - 17 - 9*	*pd 31 Mar to his Sister Eliz: Tapson*

[Pay Book entries spread across two pages; in the earlier extracts only the more important columns have been quoted, but this entry and the next are quoted in full to show how the Net Wage was obtained from the Full Wage. A deduction was made from all officers and men of one shilling a month for the Chatham Chest, a charitable foundation dating from 1590 which paid pensions to widows of warrant officers, ratings and dockyard workers killed in action or on service. However, only 6d went to the Chest: 4d went to the Chaplain and 2d to the Surgeon for their respective duties.]

A Treasurers' Pay Book for the Bredah (PRO ADM33/181) contains the following item:

Time of Entry	Whence	Name	Quality	D/R	Time of Discharge	Slop Cloaths	Tobacco
27 May 1694	*Monch*	*Jn° Tapson*	*ord*	*DD*	*3 Apr 1696*	*0 - 3 - 6*	*0 - 5 - 0*

Chest	Full Wages	Neat Wages	Short Allowance	To whom paid
1 - 4 - 3	*23 - 0 - 1*	*21 - 7 - 4*	*1 - 1 - 4*	*Ed Harman att of Father Walter admon*

John's was the fourth P.C.C. Admon. No Pay Book of that period survives for the Monarch, whence John had been transferred.

Robert died aboard the Adventure on 16 September 1681; the Captain's Log for the ship (PRO ADM51/11, Part IV) records that she was at Deptford on 18 September 1679 when Robert joined her (page 27), and contains the following entry for the day of his death and the next:

September 1681 Cruising without the Streights Mould

Fryday the 16th Engaged the Two Lyons of Algeir

This morning we had the wind Easterly about 5 we chaced a French Sattee into Alorach, and in Standing off to Sea again espied an Algeirien. At my first giveing him chace he had an English Pink in a Towe which he imediatly cast off, seeing me come soe fast up with him, Notwithstanding which he hoisted out his Boat and took the Turks and Moors out of the Pink, I being then distant from him about 3 leagues. Two English Slaves being in the Turks boat gott out of her into the Pink and seeing the Turks in great fear and disorder, they hid themselves in the Vessels hold, by which means they made their Escape. Coming within call of the Pink and seeing two English men there I gave them order to follow me, which they did for about an hour and halfe, the Pink then eloped by, and I saw noe more of her. Between one and two in the afternoon I came upon the Algeireins Side, and after I had given him one broad Side, and a Vollie of small Shott, I imediatly thereupon laid him on board, much to the Turks disadvantage, I being soe far forward of his Bowe, where I lay untill he shott the Weather Braces of my fore Yard and foretopsaile yard, we fighting with the wind upon our Quarter, I was forced a head of him, but before he could gett clear of us we had time to cutt away his Spritsaile Yard, which falling under his Bowes, did much hinder both his way and working, by which I had the Advantage of laying him imediatly on board upon the other Bowe, but could not gett crosse his halce Soe as to hinder his Ships Steerage. Notwithstanding I laid him on board twice afterwards I haveing by good fortune a double proportion of hand Granades (which we find to be of Excellent use in boarding) which did the Enemy great Damage, and gave us oppertunity (by the disorder into which it putt them) of doeing great

Execution on them with our small Shott. The fourth time of my laying him on board, in clearing himselfe of me, I shott his Mainmast by the board, the losse of which hindred his Ships way soe at once, and being before the wind, I was forced soe far a head of him, that I was necessitated to Tack to come to him again, which gave him time to quitt himselfe of the Incumbrance of his main mast, wherein he was much Intangled, And deprived me of the Oppertunity of makeing use of the disorder he was in. This happened about six in the Evening, when notwithstanding the losse and Damage he had Sustained, I found him to make a very Stout resistance, working his Ship soe well (keeping still before the wind) that I could not board him again, yett still kept fighting him within Pistoll Shott, untill 8 or 9 in the Evening, by which time being much disabled in my Masts and Riging, I found it needfull to fall a Stern to refitt myselfe, and to bring new Topsailes to the Yard. The losse of my men was alsoe soe considerable, that I was forced to new Quarter them, All on my Quarter Deck (saveing one or two) being Killed or Wounded

Saturday the 17th

About 12 or 1 at night we gott up with him again, he haveing had the oppertunity of bringing another Foresaile and Foretopsaile to his Yard, and continued fireing his Stern chace at me, untill I came up with him, then we fought each other very close, but I thought it not safe boarding him again by reason of the great defects of my Masts which were all very much Shott, We fighting still before the wind it continuing still Easterly. About 8 in the Morning (haveing taken a man from each Gun below, where they could best be spared) to man the Guns on our Quarter Deck, One of the Kings Criples, who was quartered to carry Powder for that place, haveing 3 carthrages of Powder in his hand, Stoll into the Round house, to secure himselfe from danger We not knowing what was become of him untill a great Shott from the Enemy, comeing into the Roundhouse, light among the Carthridges he had by him which takeing fire, blew him out upon the Quarter Deck and with him all the Granades we had left, which breaking among us killed and wounded every man about me. About which time we fighting him very advantagiously on the Bowe his Foremast went by the board, whereupon they imediatly called for Quarter.

When we took possession of the Prize, we found the Captain wounded, and three of his under Captains, and two Killed, he haveing in all Seaven, 4 of which being Dutch and Hambrough Runnegadoes, Another being Nephew to Boba Hassan Governour of Algeir (Who soon Dyed of his Wounds) and an old Turk called Ibrahim Rise, alias Barba rosa, who had been formerly Admiral of Algier and came this Voyage for his Pleasure. The other under Captain was a Moor. Of their men we Killed out right 127 and Wounded upwards of one hundred, one that we took was an english Runnegado which we imediatly put to Death. The Christians tell us they had yeilded the Ship upon the losse of their mainmast, had it not been for the aforesaid old Comander Ibrahim Rise, Who being a man of Extraordinary Resolution greatly encouraged the Turks, telling them of his former Successe against the Christians, Namely his fighting three Dutch men of Warr at one time, and upon another occasion engageing Sr Richd Beach in the Hamshire, with severall other brave actions.

We had Killed and Wounded 55: — 26 being Killed out right, and severall others mortally wounded. Amongst the dead were my minister, my Brother a Vollunteir, my Boatswain, my Cheife Mate and Coxswain. My other two Vollunteirs were both Wounded, Mr Rooe blown up, and Mr Woolt. Cornwall was once shott in his breast and after being dressed came up again, and was shott through the Body.

This was one of the many actions fought by ships of the *Streights Fleet* kept in the Mediterranean to protect our merchant shipping against Barbary corsairs — privateers authorized by the Turkish and Saracen governments to harry the coasts of Christian countries. [A *runnegado* (renegade) is one who deserts a party or religion in favour of another, especially, as in this instance, a Christian who becomes a Muslim.]

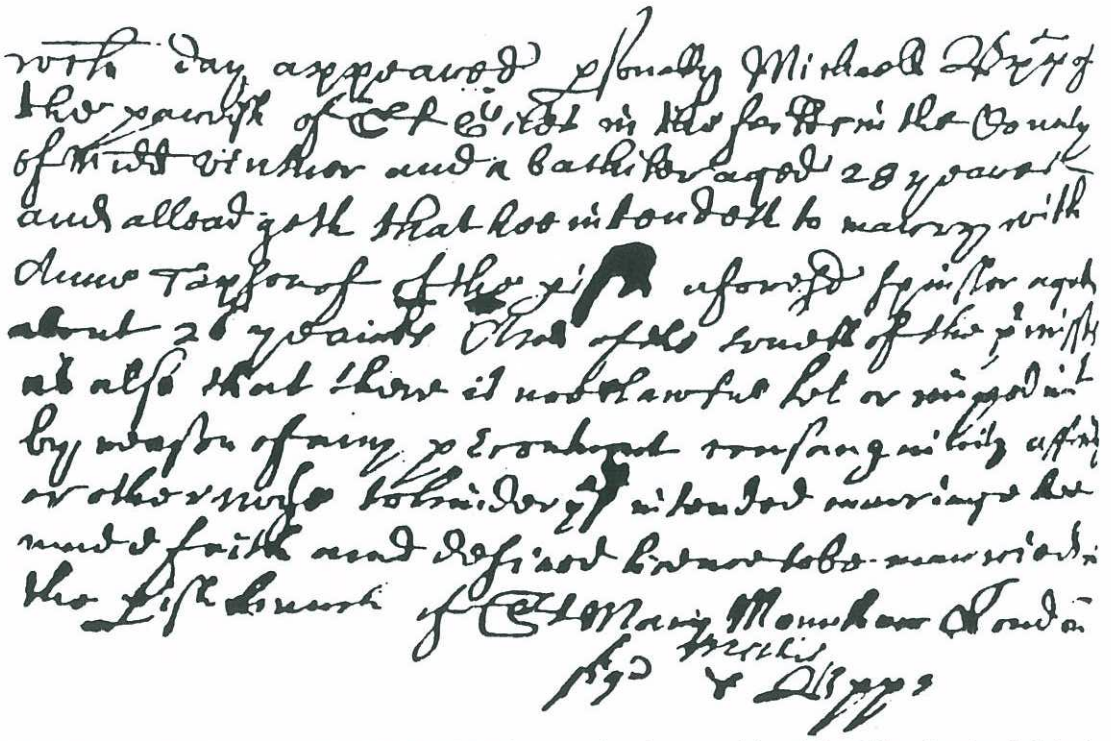
The possible identities of Captain Richard Tapson and his son, and of Robert Tapson, are discussed on pages 69 and 70, those of Thomas Tapson and John Tapson on page 79.

1.14 SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY MARRIAGE ALLEGATIONS

From the early Sixteenth Century people intending to marry were able to avoid the delay and publicity of having banns of marriage called on three successive Sundays in the parish churches of the bride and bridegroom, as had been the requirement since 1215, by obtaining a marriage licence. And just as executors who could afford the higher fee chose to have wills proven in the bishop's or the archbishop's court rather than in the local, archdeacon's, court, so it became a status symbol to marry by licence rather than by banns. A licence would normally be obtained from the office of the bishop of the diocese or of the archbishop of the province in which both parties lived and in which the marriage was to take place; the Archbishop of Canterbury could issue a marriage licence to any couple in England or Wales. To obtain a licence one of the parties, normally the bridegroom, had to make a formal statement, called an *allegation*, including an oath that there was no lawful impediment to the marriage.

A surprising entry appears in Book 18 of the Allegations Records of the Registry of the Bishop of London (GL MS10091/18), which shows that a young Tapson woman also reached London early in the Seventeenth Century. Unfortunately entries between 1634 and 1653 are missing from the register of St. Mary Mounthaw, and the bishop's transcripts for that period have not survived, so it is not possible to confirm whether or not the marriage took place. A transcription is given of the secretary hand; perhaps if the writer had realized that people would be trying to read his writing many centuries later, he might have sharpened his quill, written more neatly and avoided ink blobs.

Allegation dated 4 October 1637 (Marriage of Anne Tapson)



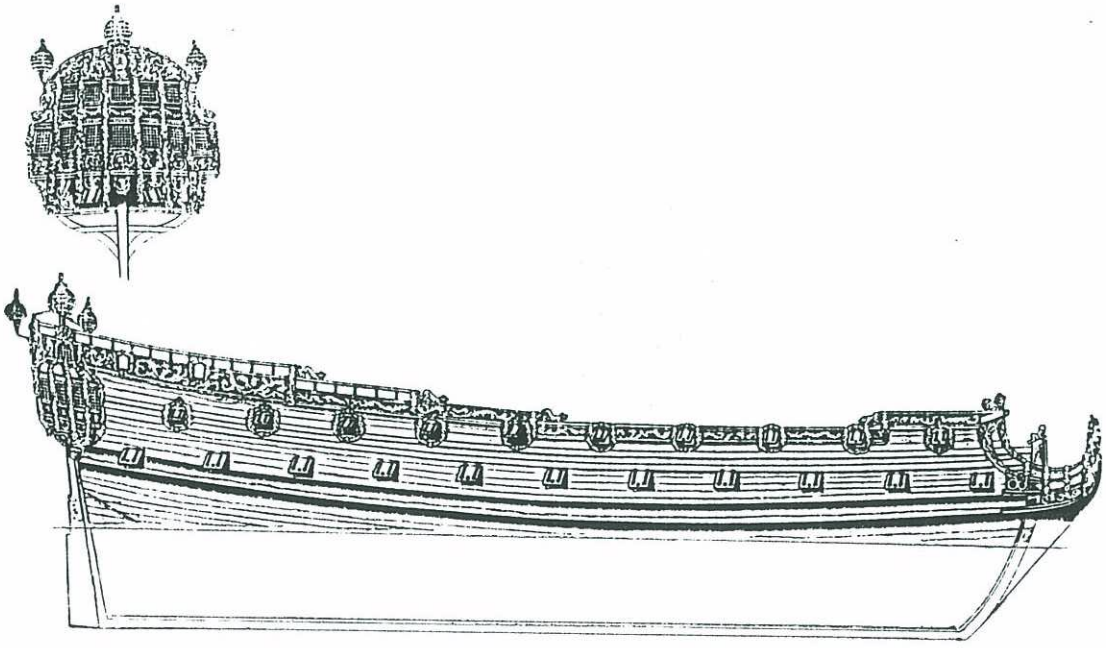
which day appeared personally Michaell Bishopp of / the parrish of St Giles in the feilds in the County / of Midd vintner and a bachiler aged 28 yeares / and alleadgeth that hee intendeth to marry with / Anne Tapson of of the parish aforesaid spinster aged / about 26 yeares And of the trueth of the premisses / as also that there is noe lawful let or impediment / by reason of any precontract consanguinity affinity / or otherwise to hinder this intended marriage hee / made faith and desired licence to be married in / the Parish Church of St Mary Mounthaw London Signed Michaell Bishopp

1.15 EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY TAPSONS

From the very start of the Eighteenth Century Tapsons began to arrive in London in increasing numbers and, as the century progressed, a few were to be found in other parts of England, even as far from home as Lancashire. During the Nineteenth Century, perhaps encouraged by improving means of travel, Tapsons became established in many parts of England and in South Wales.

At the beginning of the Nineteenth Century the fastest journey from Exeter to London was by the *Telegraph*, which did the journey in 17 hours; but, at a cost of fivepence a mile together with tips for each of the four coachmen and the guard, this method of conveyance would have been used only by the very well-to-do. At the other end of the scale, the hooded waggons of Russell and Company, which set out from Falmouth, cost only a halfpenny a mile, the team of eight horses trundling along at three miles per hour whilst the travellers walked alongside, their baggage in the waggon. In the 1820's Russell and Company introduced the *Fly Van*, which ran daily between Exeter and London and did the journey in two days for twopence a mile, the passengers sitting amongst the bales and bundles being conveyed. Not a comfortable means of travel, but better than walking alongside a waggon; even so, the journey would not have been undertaken more often than absolutely necessary. Eventually the railway arrived: the line to Exeter was opened in 1844 and was extended to Plymouth five years later. It would still have been a long and quite slow journey to London, but at least it could be endured in reasonable comfort, in spite of the smoke and smuts, so that more frequent journeys between London and Devonshire had become a real possibility.

A Fourth-Rate Ship



A draught, dated 1684, by William Keltridge of a fourth-rate ship; it has eleven guns a side on each of the two decks and three guns a side on the quarter-deck, a total of fifty guns which are specified as 12-pounders on the gun-deck, 6-pounders on the upper-deck, and 5½-pounders on the quarter-deck. Such was the *Adventure*, commanded by Captain Richard Tapson; the *Mermaid* was a fifth-rate ship.

CHAPTER 2

WILLIAM TAPSON OF EAST STONEHOUSE

2.1 PLYMOUTH AND EAST STONEHOUSE

The town of Plymouth, whose early history was much influenced by the Augustinian monks of nearby Plympton priory, first returned members to Parliament in 1292. A charter of incorporation granted in 1439 by Henry VI provided for a mayor and corporation. In 1641 Plymouth, by then a prosperous town of some 9,000 inhabitants huddled around the parish church of St. Andrew and Sutton Pool, the ancient port of Plymouth, having won from Charles I the right to set up a second parish, began the construction of the new parish church dedicated to Charles the Martyr. Immediately to the west of the parish of Plymouth St. Andrew (and about nine miles from Buckland Monachorum village) was the geographically tiny parish of East Stonehouse, formerly called *Hepeston*. Early in the Thirteenth Century this parish is said to have contained only one stone house, that of the lord of the manor, Joel de Stonehouse, hence its name, the *East* distinguishing it from a *West Stonehouse* mentioned in 1602 and believed to have been on the Cornish side of the Tamar estuary.

There are known to have been two chapels in the parish of East Stonehouse by the end of the Fifteenth Century, dedicated to St. Lawrence and to St. George. That of St. Lawrence was removed in the Eighteenth Century to make room for the construction of the Royal William Yard; the chapel of St. George, which had had the status of a chapelry of Plymouth St. Andrew until 1746, was demolished in about 1787 and a new Church of St. George was erected in its place. This new church survived until 1941, the year which saw the destruction of the heart of Plymouth, when it too was destroyed by enemy action which also split the tower vertically down the middle leaving just one half standing; this was demolished in 1950 and now no trace of the church remains. The registers of St. George were destroyed along with the church, but fortunately a transcript had been made of the earliest of these (dating from 1697) and a good series of bishop's transcripts has survived from 1762.

The Plymouth churches of St. Andrew and Charles the Martyr were also destroyed in 1941; the church of St. Andrew has been restored, but the ruins of Charles the Martyr have been left as a memorial to the civilians of Plymouth killed in World War II.

2.2 THE IDENTITY OF WILLIAM TAPSON

After the will of Richard Tapson (page 22), which was declared invalid by the Commissary Court of London on 19 July 1614 because he had failed to name an executor, the next surviving Tapson will is that of William Tapson of East Stonehouse, which was proved in London at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury on 10 June 1646 (PRO PROB11/196 Fo. 266). This will provides us with much detail about William and his family, and gives us some indication of the valuable information which has been lost as a result of the destruction of Diocese of Exeter wills when the Exeter probate office was bombed in 1942.

The Will of William Tapson dated 10 October 1632

Stonehouse the tenth of October one Thowsand sixe hundred thirtie and twoe. Memorandum that of William Tapson of East Stonehouse in the Countie of Devon Merchant. Being in good health and perfect memorie thankes be unto God, Doe make this my last Will and Testament. Imprimis I bequeathe my soule to God my maker and Redeemer and my bodie to Christian buriall And next I give and bequeathe my goods as Followeth: First I give and bequeathe to the Poore stock of Stonehouse the summ of Fower poundes. Plus I give and bequeathe unto the poore of Buckland monocorum the summ of Fortie shillings. Plus I give and bequeath unto my welbeloved wife Elizabeth Tapson one hundred poundes Besides the hundred poundes that I was bound to give her at my Marryage with her. This hundred poundes now given her to be paide three yeeres next after my Decease. And alsoe shee is to have Fiftie poundes per yeere to be paide her out of my meanes which I made unto her when I married her. Alsoe my will is that my said wife shall have my howse to dwell in as long as she remaineth Widdowe and noe longer. I meane the howse forward but not the Brewhouse Maulthouse nor Bakehowse For that my will is shall goe for the benefitt of my Children. Alsoe I give and bequeathe unto my brother Thomas Tapson one hundred poundes, and what is betwixt my brother and myselfe not to be questioned on neither side but freely to be Cleered. Plus I give and bequeathe unto my sonn Richard Tapson my howse and ground thereunto belonging After he shall come unto the age of one and twentie yeeres For the rest of the time then to Come wholie for his owne use. But before he come to that age to be imployed for the use and benefitt of all my Children. All the rest of my goodes and Chattells not given nor bequeathed I give and bequeath equallie betwixt my Children. And I doe appoint for my overseers and executors in trust of this my will and testament my welbeloved Brother in Lawe master Thomas Edgecumbe, my brother in law master Nevill Blyeght gentleman, and my brother John Tapson, and my brother Thomas Tapson To whome I give Five poundes apeece. And my will is that presentlie upon my Decease that my said overseers doe take an Inventorie of all my goods and to make sale of all and to sett my Mills and ground or to make the best use and advantage of all for my said Children. And my Will and Desire is that my Shipps and Goods being sould that my Depts may be paide as soone as possible may be. And alsoe I will intreate you that my Children may be well brought upp And what remaineth my Debts being paide and what increase shall come I praie Adventure for them to the Newfoundland or any other place you shall in your discretion thinke fitt or any parte thereof. Intreateing you to imploy it all and all the increase thereof for their best advantage allowing yourselves for any paines or chardges you shall be at about the bussines. And what you or any of you shall Doe heerein shalbe Freelie allowed. And soe I praie God to guide and Direct you and blesse us all Amen Given under my hand and Seale the Tenthe daie of October one Thowsand sixe hundred Thirtie and twoe William Tapson
Sealed and Signed in the presence of us Francis Yoe & (the sign of) Robert Creese

Thomas Edgcumbe and Neville Blight may have been husbands of William's sisters or of his wife's sisters,* but from his will we know that William had two brothers, John and Thomas. That he made bequests for the poor of Buckland Monachorum, as well as for the poor of East Stonehouse, suggests that he had close associations with that parish — that it might even have been his place of birth. Following up this line of thought we observe that a William, a John and a Thomas, sons of Richard Tapson, had been baptized in Buckland Monachorum (Page 4). The complete list of children recorded in the Buckland Monachorum register as sons or daughters of Richard Tapson is as follows:

*A *Nevell Blight* married a *Marye Hitchings* at Egloskerry on 22 September 1630, just four years after William had married Elizabeth Hitchings (page 35).

An indenture (DRO Z12/31/19), of which an abstract is given, is concerned with William's leasehold on mills and land belonging to the borough of Plymouth:

Assignment of Lease dated 26 December 1639 (Abstract)

Indenture dated 26 December, 15 Charles, between

1. William Tapson of Stonehouse in Plymouth, marchant
2. Stephyn Trevill of Plymouth, marchant

Recites an indenture of 10 August, 35 Elizabeth [1593], in which *for good Consideracon* the *Maior and Cominalty of the Borrough of Plymouth* granted unto S^{r} Francis Drake Knight, since deceased, one close of land called Griffins Parke within the Borough of Plymouth, of 1½ acres or thereabouts, the adjoining highway and two grist mills contained in a house *builded uppon parcel of the said Close*; and also another close of land within the Borough of Plymouth, adjoining the west side of the highway from Plymouth to Tavistock, with two grist mills contained in a house built on that close; and another close of land within the Borough of Plymouth called Malt Mill Close together with the malt mill *builded in or neare the said Close and all that Leate* running to the mills. All for a term of *threescore and seaven years*, at a yearly rent of *fower and thirtie pownds three shillings and fower pence*.

Recounts that since the making of the lease *there have beene twoe tuckeinge mills erected* on Malt Mill Close.

Recounts that *all the estate and interest of ..... the aforesaid premises since ..... came unto S^{r} Francis Drake of Buckeland Monochorum ..... Barronett deceased Cozen of thsaid S^{r} Francis Drake Knight*.•

Recounts that *S^{r} Francis Drake Barronett in his life tyme did by his deede Indented* dated 14 November, 7 Charles [1631], *grant assigne transferre sett over and confirme unto the said William Tapson the moyetie or halfendeale of all and singular the aforesaid premisses .... Togeather with the moyetie or halfendeale of all Customes tolles proffitts & advantages* of the said mills *and also the moyetie or halfendeale of all the Mulcture tolle sute and Grist of all the Corne and grayne of the free Inhabitants of the said Borrough of Plymouth from tyme to tyme to the said Mills incident accustomed belongeinge or appurteyneinge, and also the moyetie or halfendeale of the said Leate .... Togeather with the moyetie or halfendeale of all such Fynes Forfeytures and sumes of money as should bee incurred by any of the Freemen or Inhabitants of the said Towne or by any others for not grindeinge to the said Mills or any of them or for buyeinge there meale of any other readye ground elsewhere or divertinge or hindringe the runninge of the said water and Leate .... in as full hardye and ample manner as hee the said S^{r} Francis Drake then did or might enioye .... for and duringe all the residewe of the said Tearme of threescore & seaven yeares then to come and unexpired .... Hee the said William Tapson .... yeildeinge and payeinge to the said Maior and Cominaltie of the Borrough of Plymouth yearlye .... the moyetye or halfendeale of the said fower and thirtie pownds three shillings and fower pence rent*.

Witnesses that William Tapson *in Consideracon .... of nyne hundred seaventie-five Pownds .... payde .... and in Consideracon of the Surrendringe .... of a Former Lease heretofore made of the Premisses to the said Stephyn Trevill by the said William Tapson and for and in Consideracon that the said Stephyn Trevill hath relinquished .... unto the said William Tapson .... Twoe hundred twentye and five Pownds .... due and payable by the said William Tapson to the said Stephen Trevill at certen dayes yet to cume by vertue ot the aforesaid Lease .... Hath given granted .... unto the said Stephyn Trevill .... the aforesayde moyetie or halfendeale .... for and dureinge the residewe of the aforesaid Tearme*.

In a grist-mill grain is ground; a malt-mill is a mill for grinding or crushing malt, i.e. grain prepared for brewing or distilling by steeping, germinating and then kiln-drying. *Tucking mill* is a West of England term apparently meaning a fulling-mill, in which woollen cloth is cleansed and thickened by washing and beating. A *halfendeal* means the same as a *moiety*, i.e. one half, or approximately one half. Multure (*mulcture*) is a toll consisting of a proportion of the grain ground, paid to the proprietor or tenant of a mill for the privilege of having corn ground at it. To *set* a property is to let it out for rent.

•See Appendix VI (Addenda).

2.4 PROPERTY CONVEYANCE*

A full understanding of the early history of the Tapson family requires some knowledge of the methods of property conveyance; the following account need not be fully understood at this stage, but can be referred to as and when necessary.

In Mediæval times the transfer of real estate from one party to another was usually by *Lease, Feoffment* or *Fine.* The 1639 indenture just quoted is a transfer by lease, and some explanation of this method of conveyance is given first.

THE LEASE This transferred property, normally either for a fixed number of years or for the life of the recipient or for several named lives, in return for an initial financial *consideration* and a subsequent annual rent, usually to be paid on the four *quarter days* — Lady Day (25 March, the Feast of the Annunciation of Our Blessed Lady Mary the Virgin and the first day of the new year before 1752), Midsummer Day (24 June, the Feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist), Michaelmas Day (29 September, the Feast of St. Michael the Archangel), and Christmas Day (25 December, the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord Christ). The deed took the form of an *indenture*. [In Mediæval times an indenture was any legal document between two parties written in duplicate, head-to-head, on one skin. The skin was then indented — cut into two halves in a wavy or jagged manner — so that, when the duplicates were produced by the two parties in court, each with its top edge indented, they would fit together and so be seen to belong to one another.]

THE FEOFFMENT This was a permanent transfer of property effected by the ceremony of *livery of seizin*. [*Seizin* means the legal possession, with occupation, of freehold property, and *livery of seizin* was the ceremony, held on the land being transferred, of taking possession, in which the vendor, the *feoffor*, would deliver to the purchaser, the *feoffee*, a token part of the property, such as a piece of turf or a key, in the presence of witnesses.] The livery of seizin constituted the actual conveyance, which was subsequently recorded on a charter or deed establishing the terms of the feoffment and sometimes endorsed on the back with a statement that the livery of seizin had been carried out before witnesses. A charter of feoffment was normally accompanied by another deed known as a *Quitclaim*, which was a disclaimer by the vendor of interest in the property from any other party, such as one of his relatives who might make a claim on the property in the future and sue the purchaser for wrongful occupation, perhaps on the ground that the property should only pass by inheritance.

THE FINE Because charters recording a feoffment could be stolen or forged, the search for a really secure mode of conveyance led, early in the history of conveyancing, to the evolution of the *Fine*. Initially this meant the *final settlement* of a lawsuit at the Court of Common Pleas at Westminster regarding a disagreement over title to land, which not only put an end (*finis*) to the suit thus commenced but also gave full security against any subsequent claims on the property. Very quickly it came to be realized that the same degree of security would be available if fictitious suits were brought before the Court. The intended purchaser, called the *plaintiff*, and the vendor, called the *deforciant*, would, by leave of the Court, arrive at a compromise agreement, the terms of which were just the terms of the conveyance already agreed between the parties. A copy of this *Final Concord*, which was the conveyance, would then be preserved in the records of the Court.

As early as 1195 the procedure to be adopted in such fictitious actions was regularized. The terms of the fine were to be written three times on a single sheet of parchment, two copies head-to-head and the third at right angles to the other two across the foot of the parchment. The parchment was then to be cut into three along indented lines. Each of the two parties received a copy of this tripartite indenture and the *foot of the fine* was preserved amongst the Court records. These *Feet of Fines*, which were the ultimate protection against forgery, are now in the Public Record Office and form an almost unbroken series from 1195 up to 1833, when the system was finally abolished. The earliest fine preserved in the Public Record Office is dated 1 December 1182.

*A.W.B. SIMPSON: History of the Land Law O.U.P. 1961

Over the years the transfer of property to *Feoffees to Uses* had become popular; but in 1535 Parliament made this practice illegal by passing the Statute of Uses. A loophole in this statute made conveyancing by *Bargain and Sale* attractive; a Statute of Enrolments closed this loophole. Not to be outdone, lawyers then invented the device of *Lease and Release,* which circumvented both statutes. These three methods of conveyancing are now described.

CONVEYANCE TO A FEOFFEE TO USES By the Thirteenth Century it had become widespread practice for an owner to convey his property to a *feoffee to uses* (a person holding property on behalf of another — a trustee) or to several such feoffees for the *use* (benefit) of an ultimate beneficiary, who might even be the owner himself. Thus a property might be conveyed to a feoffee who would look after it to the use of the owner whilst he was away at war. Or a man who did not wish his land, or all of it, to pass to his eldest son by *primogeniture* under Common Law might make it over during his lifetime to feoffees who would hold it to the use of the original owner; the latter would then execute a *Last Will* expressing his wish regarding who should be the user of the land after his death; in this way some of his land could pass to his younger sons.

This practice led to many abuses such as feoffees, upon whom the seizin had been conferred, refusing possession to the intended beneficiary, or to the avoidance of feudal dues or to other types of fraud. In 1535 Parliament passed the *Statute of Uses*, which made the creation of uses illegal. The basic principle embodied in this legislation was that the legal estate be vested in the beneficiary, the person named as user, rather than in the feoffees; in reality the statute was drafted with the intention of doing away with feoffees altogether. In this way frauds on private persons (in which, it has been suggested, Henry VIII was probably not very interested) and the evasion of feudal dues (which were his by right as supreme lord and in which he certainly was interested) would both be prevented.

BARGAIN AND SALE After 1535 conveyance was still carried out by feoffment but, because of the publicity of livery of seizin, this mode of conveyance was much disliked by landowners, and so a procedure for private and secret conveyance was devised. It had already been well established by 1535 that, by *Bargain and Sale* procedure, the vendor bargained and sold a property to a purchaser and so found himself holding it to the purchaser's use; however, according to the Statute of Uses, ownership had passed at once to the user. There would therefore be no need in future for a ceremony of livery of seizin, a secret Bargain and Sale would suffice.

However, Parliament, realizing that secret conveyancing would help the perpetration of fraud and the avoidance of feudal dues, acted quickly to close this loophole in the Statute of Uses by passing, in the same year, the *Statute of Enrolments*. This statute allowed the conveyance of property by Bargain and Sale without the need for livery of seizin, but made it void until it had been enrolled at one of the central courts or before a Justice of the Peace.

LEASE AND RELEASE Since Feoffment and Bargain and Sale both resulted in unwanted publicity, the one by livery of seizin, the other by enrolment, a new device had to be found to enable secret but legally valid conveyance. About 1600 such a device, which became known as *Lease and Release*, was invented, and it quickly superseded conveyance either by Feoffment or by Bargain and Sale, although conveyance by means of a Fine remained popular. Conveyance by Lease and Release continued in regular use until it was finally abolished by the Real Property Act of 1845, when the Statute of Uses was repealed.

The first part of the Lease and Release is a *lease* of the property by the vendor to the purchaser for one year at a nominal rent; this could be done by a deed which did not need to be enrolled. The following day the vendor would *release* his rights to the purchaser, leaving him in full ownership without the need for enrolment or livery of seizin, since the purchaser was already in possession. It was even possible to declare uses on a release in order to create settlements. The Statute of Uses was thus circumvented.

2.5 EQUITY SUITS IN CHANCERY

The Court of Chancery, dating from the reign of Edward the Confessor (1042 - 1066) and presided over by the Lord High Chancellor of England, was, until 1873, the highest court in the land next to the House of Lords. The equity side of the Court of Chancery functioned from the Fourteenth Century until 1873, dealing, on the basis of Roman Law, with cases for which the Common Law made no provision and, later, with cases remedial under Common Law but in which the plaintiff would have found himself under a legal disadvantage. Sir Thomas Coventry, Knt, held the office of *Lord Keeper of the Great Seal of England* from 1 November 1625 to 22 January 1639. The office was then held for a short period by Sir John Finch, Knt; he was succeeded in 1640 by Sir Edward Littleton, Knt, later Lord Littleton, who retained the office until 26 August 1645.

Oral proceedings in Court, of which there are no transcripts, were preceded by written statements collectively known as *Chancery Proceedings*; they are of two main types:

(i) PLEADINGS An equity suit was initiated by a *Bill of Complaint*, a written statement submitted by the plaintiff, known as the *Orator*, setting out his case against the defendant. The defendant then submitted a written *Answer*. This might be followed by a *Replication* from the plaintiff, which might in turn produce a *Rejoinder* from the defendant, and so on.

(ii) EVIDENCE Evidence might include *Depositions* by witnesses (written answers to questions put to them by counsel for both parties) and *Affidavits* (voluntary statements made upon oath). Matters upon which the Court felt unable to pronounce a verdict were submitted to a *Master* for investigation; Masters' documents contain depositions, affidavits, estate accounts, wills, title deeds and other documents, as well as the drafts of their reports founded upon these items.

Much of our knowledge about William and his brothers is to be gleaned from the proceedings of the numerous Chancery suits in which they were involved. In this chapter the Bills of Complaint are given in full, since they provide a wealth of information about events in William's life and, perhaps even more interestingly, about the conduct of business in the first half of the Seventeenth Century. On the other hand, the Answers usually deal point by point with the accusations levelled against the defendant in the Bill of Complaint and generally add little fresh information; so in the following pages they are briefly summarized. After the Court hearing the final decree was recorded, provided the case had proceeded to a conclusion; these judicial decisions are not included in this book; nor are the few items of evidence which have survived.

One is struck not only by the verbosity of these pleadings, with their often ill-thought-out arguments which leave one uncertain as to the precise nature of the allegations (although, from our perspective, this contributes to their interest and charm), but also by the almost complete lack of hard evidence provided; perhaps it was the function of the Court officials to tease this out. On the matter of spelling, it is worth mentioning that often an unrecognizable word will immediately become obvious if *i* and *y*, or *i* and *j*, or occasionally *i* and *e*, are interchanged, e.g. *inioyned* becomes *enjoined*; also, the word-ending *-con* is used for *-tion*, e.g. *accon* for *action*. One of the earliest suits in which William was involved concerned his mills on Plymouth Leat.

2.6 CHANCERY SUIT: RICHARD LAPPE v WILLIAM TAPSON

xxij Novembris 1632 *To the righte honorable Thomas Lord Coventrye Lord Keeper of the Greate Seale of England*

Humbly sheweth and informeth your good Lordshippe your Lordshippes poore and daylye Orator Richard Lappe of Tamerton Folliott within the Countie of Devon yeoman That whereas in the parlyament holden att Westminster in the Seaven and Twentythe yeare of the raigne of our late Soveraigne the Ladye Queene Elizabeth of ever happy memorye it was enacted that it should bee lawefull to the maior and communaltie of Plymouth within the said Countye of Devon and to theire Successors to digge and myne a Trenche or dytch conteyneinge in breadth betwixte sixe or seaven feete over in all places throughe all the grounde lyeinge betweene the said Towne of Plymouth and any

parte of the River of Mewe for the necessarie conveyinge of the said River to the said Towne of Plymouth the said Towne beeinge by the said Statute inioyned to make reparacons and all things necessarie where the said River mighte bee broughte and continewe in Flote unto the said Towne of Plymouth as by the said Statute itselfe (relacon beeinge thereunto had) more fullye and att large appeareth by force of which Statute the same Towne of Plymouth att theire Coste and charges procured the said River of Mewe or a greate parte thereof to bee broughte unto theire said Towne to theire exceedeinge greate comoditie and profitt, the said Mewe Leate or River runninge throughe a feilde of your said Orator called Widwell and neere adioyneinge to your said Orators mansyon howse and aboute a halfe yeare sithence the bankes of the said Leate or River in your said Orators feilde (and which the said Towne of Plymouth was to repayer att theire owne proper Costes and Charges) beeinge in decaye for as by a breache in youre said orators Close your said Orator received greate preiudice by the overfloate thereof in the spoyle of his Corne and other necessaryes aboute his mansyon house and Towne place soe as for prevencon of further losse and preiudice unto your said Orator one Richard Lappe sonne unto your said orator diverted by the space of a quarter of an houre parte of the said Current or streame the contrarye waye and for in that tyme repayred and made good the said breach in your orators feilde for which divercon or turneinge aside of the said streame or Current one William Tapson of Stonehowse in the said Countie of Devon gent haveinge (as your said orator believeth) some interest in one or more of the water milles about Plymouth which are mainteyned and kepte on worke by the said streame caused your said orators son to be arrested and putt in suyte whereuppon your said orator labouringe and indeavoringe to sett free his said sonne and to discharge him of all troubles concerneinge this businesse repayred unto the said William Tapson and by medyacon procured a referrence thereof unto Nicholas Lunt and William Chrppyn Arbitrators indiffirentlye chosen and agreed on betwixte them for the fynall endeinge and determinacon of the said businesse who did awarde and arbitrate that your said orator should (on the behalfe of his said sonne) paye unto the said William Tapson all such coste and charges as hee the said William Tapson had been putt unto touchinge and concerneinge the said suyte and businesse aforesaid with which awarde and Arbitracon the said William Tapson seemed to bee very well pleased and Contented but pretendeinge and informeinge your said orator that uppon breach of a Statute Lawe in that case made and provided your said Orators sonne had incurred the payne and forfeityre of Tenne pounde to his magistie and other Tenne pounde to the Towne of Plymouth by diverteinge of the said water (whereas in truthe, as your said orator hath been sithence informed, there is noe such lawe nor statute) Caused your said Orator together with one Thomas Eustes to enter into a penall bonde of Sixe and Fortye pounde for the payment of the somme of Twentie three pounde unto him the said William Tapson his executors or Assignes att a daye then followinge and already past Hee the said William Tapsonn att the tyme of the sealeinge and deliverye of the said bonde makeinge an absolute promise and agreement to and with your said orator that hee the said William Tapson would not only take none other advantage or benefitt by the said bonde but onlye soe much as should and mighte discharge and Cleere his Cost and charges formerlie disburste aboute the said suyte, but would indeavor and medyate withall (in your said orators behalfe) with the Maior and Communaltye and Towne of Plymouth to remitt and pardon any such pretended fyne or penaltie as they mighte or should any wayes demande or Clayme of your said orator or of his said sonne for the supposed offence in diverteinge parte of the said streame or Current in regard the same was occasioned by neglecte of the Townes Reparacons of the said water bankes as aforesaid. And afterwarde att another tyme your said orator repayred againe unto the said William Tapson acquainteinge him howe that the Towne of Plymouth had freely and absolutelye acquitted and freed your said Orator and his said sonne for or Concerneinge the said offence or any benifitt they mighte make or expecte thereby Tendringe him [i.e. to William Tapson] *withall Tenne pounde for discharge of the said Coste of suyte if lesse mighte not contente him desireinge him with all dither to accepte that somme of Tenne pounde and yeald uppe the said obligacon of 46li for payment of 23li or elshowever to yeald upp and Cancell the said Bond and to proceede and take his Course against your orators said sonne for that by such meanes the said Thomas Eustes (whoe became bounde onlye as suretie and att the requeste of your said orator) mighte bee thereby freed and discharged with which proffer the said William Tapson seemed then well pleased faithfullye promiseinge withall to doe thone or thother* [the one or the other] *but desired some shorte tyme for such his eleccon Nowe soe it is maye it please your good Lordshippe that albeytt your*

said orator and the said Thomas Eustes entred into the said bonde and became bounde unto the said William Tapson in the said somme of 46li for the payment of 23li without any pennye lent or other Consideracon but only for payeinge and dischargeinge such Coste unto the said William Tapson as hee the said Tapson had been putt unto in prosecuteinge the said suyte against your said orators sonne as aforesaid and albeytt the said Towne of Plymouth have absolutely pardoned and acquitted your orators said sonne and withall your orator for or touchinge the said pretended offence or any advantage which mighte accrue to them thereby and albeytt upon your said orators tender of the said Tenne pounde the said William Tapson faithfully promised to yeald upp or release the said bond yet the said William Tapson hath nowe of late arrested and prosecuted your said Orator and the said Thomas Eustes by suyte at Comon Lawe uppon the said bonde entendeinge to recover and take the whole forfeiture and penaltie thereof Contrarye to all equitie and good Conscience Nowe to thintente the said William Tapson maye expresselye uppon his Corporall oathe sett downe and shewe whether the said bonde was entred into for any moneyes lente and for howe much and whether for any other consideracon then formerlye expressed and for what Consideracon and withall confesse your said Orators tender unto him of the said somme of Tenne pounde for the discharge of the said bonde and what charges hee had been then necessarilie putt unto touchinge the said suyte and make a full and perfecte and directe Answeare to all other particulars in this Bill sett downe and for that your Orator cannot bee releived att Lawe uppon the said promise of deliveringe upp the said bond in regard the same paste in private nor can otherwise bee releived for and touchinge other the premises but onlye in equitie by the ayde of this honourable Courte Maye it therefore please your good Lordshippe the premises graciouslye Considdered to graunt unto your said Orator his majestys gratious wrytt of Subpena to bee directed unto him the said William Tapson thereby Commaundeinge him att a certeine daye and under a certeine payne therein to bee lymitted to bee and personallye to appear before your honourable good lordshippe in his majestys highe Courte of Chauncery then and there to make directe Answere unto the said severall premises And alsoe to grante unto your orator his majestys wrytt of Iniunction to bee directed unto the said William Tapson his Councellors Attourneyes and Sollicitors thereby enioyneinge them and every of them to staye and surcease the said suyte att Common Lawe and noe further to proceed therein against your said orator untill further order shalbee taken therein by your honourable good lordshippe And your said Orator (as in dutie bound) shall daylye praye for your lordshippes prosperitie with increase of honnor

In these proceedings (PRO C2/CHAS I/L22/11) the Bill of Complaint was witnessed by *John Doidge*. In his Answer, which was witnessed by *Will Simons* and *Tho: Riche*, William informed the Court that the *Maior and Cominaltie of the Borrough of Plymouth* had purchased an estate *in thone moytie of Five grist Mills and Twoe Fulling Mills* driven by the stream specified in the Act of Parliament and the Bill of Complaint. The defendant had *purchased a terme of nyne and twenty yeres or thereabouts of and in thother moytie of the said Mills which cost him one thousand five hundred pounds in ready mony besides the value of one hundred pounds more in reparacons*. Also the *Maior and Cominaltie and this defendant* were *enforced to be at ten pounds waiges yerely to men by them appointed to repaire the bancks of the said milstreame and to observe by whom the said milstream was diverted*, as was *often tymes* found, causing them *greate losse*.

About a yere and halfe since in the Somer tyme when water was scarse, the complainant's son turned away some of the water in the mill-leat in order to supply the wants of another mill in the complainant's parish where his corn and grist was ground, so that he might have it ground *tollfree*. The defendant caused the complainant's son to be arrested and *put in suyte* and intended to proceed to a trial, but the complainant, knowing his son had often offended in that way, *by his consent as this defendant verily believes, laboured and endeavoured much with this defendant to have an ende to the suite*. The defendant agreed to the appointment of arbitrators, who ruled that, because of the great cost that the *Maior and Cominaltie and this defendant were yerely put unto*, the complainant should pay the defendant £23 and that the *Complainant with some one other with him* should enter into a bond for its payment at a certain time, and the suit should thereupon cease. The complainant thanked the arbitrators and voluntarily entered into a bond for £46 with *Thomas Eustace his sonneinlawe* to pay the £23, not upon any such pretence of the defendant as the complainant alleges.

Because the complainant did not pay the £23 within the time specified, or since, the defendant has lately caused him and his son-in-law Eustace to be arrested and prosecuted, not in order to recover the said forfeiture or penalty, as is pretended, but the principal debt with reasonable costs and damages. To the defendant's knowledge the banks of the leat were not in decay; nor did the complainant receive any prejudice by the *overflote* spoiling his corn, so causing his son to divert the stream to prevent further damage; neither had the defendant forced the complainant and Eustace to enter into the penal bond for £46. The defendant also denies that he at any time promised not to take any other advantage of the bond or that he would mediate on the complainant's behalf with the *Maior and Cominalty*. The complainant did *oftentymes repaire unto him* to acquaint him that he was in hope of persuading the Cominalty of Plymouth to free and acquit him and his son concerning the offence and offered to pay the defendant at one time £3, at another time another sum, and at last £10 for *dischardging of the said costs*, desiring him to accept thereof and *yeeld upp* the said obligation or to *yeeld up* or cancel the said bond and to proceed against his son; but the defendant denies that he was well pleased with the said proffers or that he promised to do one or the other, but told the complainant he would *advise with his Councell*, never meaning or intending to accept any of the said offers, for the reasons aforesaid.

The defendant *also sayth* that the bond was not entered into for any penny lent, but to recompense *this defendant and the Maior and Cominalty*, who were responsible *to such as hold the said Fulling Mills from them at yearly rents to mayntayne the said Milleate* and ensure they do not want for water by reason of diversions, and for the ending of the said suit and discharging the costs. The defendant well knows that the town of Plymouth has not pardoned or acquitted the complainant or his son, as is alleged in the Bill of Complaint. The defendant *further sayth that he paid divers charges* for the prosecuting of the said suit, but cannot now set down with certainty how much.

The lease on the moiety purchased by William on 14 November 1631 (page 37) would have been due to expire on 9 August 1660, so when he bought it there would have been nearly 29 years of unexpired lease: William quotes a *terme of nyne and twenty yeres or thereabouts* . William also states that Richard Lappe had diverted the leat *about a yere and halfe since in the Somer tyme*; the Bill of Complaint is dated 22 November 1632, so the offence seems to have occurred in the summer of 1631 — just before William purchased the lease. An indication of William's financial status is provided by the staggering cost (for 1631) of £1,500 plus an additional £100 for repairs.

The statute mentioned in the Bill of Complaint dates from 27 Elizabeth (1584). It permitted the construction of a leat to bring water from the river Mewe (Meavy) to Plymouth. Plans for the undertaking were prepared by Robert Lampyn and preliminaries of the actual works commenced in 1589 under the guidance of Sir Francis Drake, who had used his influence to smooth the Water Act through Parliament and was subsequently associated with the project under contract to Plymouth Corporation, for which he received £200. [It was at one time wrongly believed that Sir Francis had given the leat to the town; it is clear from the 1639 indenture (page 37) that Sir Francis had further profitted by being granted a 67-year lease on land adjoining the leat, on which he had built four grist-mills, a malt-mill and two tucking-mills.] The Plymouth town ledger, begun in 1535/6 to record all matters of importance relating to civic life within the borough and known as the *Black Book* (WDRO W46), has the entry for the year of Walter Pepperell's mayoralty (1590-91):

> *This yere on the daye of December S^r^ Fraunces Drake Kneight beganne to bringe the Ryur Mewe to the towne of Plymouth which being in lenght about 25 myles he with greate Care and diligence effected and brought the River into the towne the xxiiij^th^ daye of Aprill the next after presentlie after he sett in hand to Builde sixe greast mills two at wythy in eck buckland parish thother 4 by the towne the two at wythy and the two next to the towne he fullie fynished before Michaelmas next after and grounde Corne with theym*

The Receivers' Book of Accounts No III (WDRO W132) for that mayoral term of office shows that the completion of the undertaking was the occasion for great celebrations; items entered include:

Itm pd to 4 trumpetors that were att the leate by Mr. Maiors comaundemt	*v s*	
Itm p to mr Whitakers for wyne to Carry to the leate	*xl s*	*vj d*
Itm to the gunnrs thatt daye		*xvj d*

2.7 CHANCERY SUIT: WILLIAM TAPSON v RICHARD & WILLIAM ROWE

22 die Junij 1629 *To the Right Honorable Thomas Lord Coventry Lord Keeper of the Great Seale of England*

Humbly Complayning sheweth unto your good Lordshipp William Tapson of Stonehouse in the County of Devon Merchant That whereas your Orator and William Row of Stonehouse aforesayd being partners and ioynt owners of the good shipp called the Fellowshippe and being minded to putt her to sea conceiving that she would want fowre pieces of Ordinance for strengthning her and understanding that one Richard Row and William Row of Milbrooke in the County of Devon aforesayd had fowre pieces of Ordinance which they were willing to spare and the same being fitt for your Orator and the sayd William Row of Stonehouse his service there was some Speech and Communication of Buying the same by and betweene the sayd William Row of Stonehouse and your Orator And the sayd William Row of Milbrooke and the sayd Richard Row whereupon it was agreed betweene them as well by the sayd William Row of Stonehouse as your Orator that if the sayd William Row of Stonehouse and your Orator should like the same foure pieces then they should give for them after the Rate of eighteene shillings the hundred waight which Agreement was made in private betweene the partyes aforesayd before no witnesses at all your Orator nothing doubting of any sinister dealing in or by the sayd William Row and Richard Row or either of them having long knowne them and many passages and contracts having heretofore passed and byn betweene them in which till now they had never any controversy with your Orator But dealt freely and playnely and therefore your Orator relyed on the word of the sayd William Row and Richard Row and they did so likewise on your Orator and the sayd William Row of Stonehouse there having never byn any former cause to the contrary After which the sayd William Row and Richard Row of Milbrooke sent unto your Orator and the said Row of Stonehouse the sayd foure pieces of Ordinance waighing about Fower score and Eighteen hundred waight who received the same and putt two of them in the sayd shipp called Fellowship and intended within a short space to have placed the other two in the same shippe also had he not bene prevented by the Intreaty and desire of the sayd William Row and Richard Row of Milbrooke who having present occasion to sett forth and man out a shippe of their owne signified unto your Orator that they wanted two peeces of Ordinance and therefore Requested your sayd Orator that they might have backe agayne the sayd two pieces which were not as yet placed in your Orators shippe whereto your Orator with the approbacon of the sayd William Row of Stonehouse consented the rather for that the sayd William Row and Richard Row of Milbrooke pretended to have done your Orator a great curtesy to let him have the sayd pieces and thereupon the sayd William and Richard Row of Milbrooke agreed to take backe agayne the sayd two pieces and your Orator payd the sayd Richard Row twenty pounds in mony in private without Acquittance and payd more twenty pounds to one Richard Foot of Buckland by direction of the sayd Richard Rowe and William Row of Milbrooke or one of them in discharge of so much debt due to the sayd Foot by the sayd Rowes or one of them which forty pounds was for the sayd two pieces used in the sayd shippe called the Fellowshippe And your Orator in liew of the sayd two pieces which were now agreed to Remayne still with the sayd Rowes provided himselfe of two other in their Roomes which he placed in his sayd shippe and made his voyage with them. But now so it is may it please your good Lordshipp that the sayd William and Richard Row of Milbrooke deny the Receit of any mony from your Orator or that they ever gave any direction to pay the same upon the sayd debt to Foot having by some meanes found out where to provide themselves of two pieces at a Cheaper Rate and in respect that the Agreement aforesayd to retake the same passed in private speeches betweene them without any Ceremony or Observation of witnesses but only such who now are at Sea being marriners and seafaring men therefore they have since refused to take backe the sayd two pieces of Ordinance agayne. And not only so but in respect also that your Orator cannott produce any witnes touching the sayd Originall Agreement made in private as aforesayd but your Orator before some neighbors being demanded how he had provided himselfe of Ordinance confessed to them and at other times and before others that he had bought the sayd pieces of the sayd William Row and Richard Row of Milbrooke not menconing that the sayd William Row your Orators partner was any way party to the sayd contract therefore by color of such speeches and confession of your Orator and to ease the sayd William Row of Stonehouse who is neare of kind to thother Rowes of Milbrooke, the sayd two

Rowes of Milbrooke have commenced action at the Common Law agaynst your Orator alone supposing a contract by your Orator sole thereby intending to lay the whole burden upon him contrary to their owne Agreement and although they well know your Orator is no farther ingaged nor made any promise contract or Agreement but jointly with the sayd William Row of Stonehouse who hath now combined himselfe with the other defendants of purpose to cleare himselfe by imposing the whole burden upon your Orator In tender consideracon whereof and to thend that they may discover what Agreements have passed betweene your Orator and the defendants and the materiall circumstances thereof and what they have received whether the sayd William Row of Stonehouse were not so much ingaged as your Orator to them or how farr he was or is Ingaged touching the premises to them or either of them and why they putt him not in suit as well as your Orator and further to set forth the truth of all the premises May it please your good Lordshipp to grant unto your Orator his Majesties most gracious writt of subpena to be directed to the said William and William and Richard Row commanding them thereby at a certayne day and under a certayne payne therein to be Limited personally to be and appeare before your Lordshipp in his Majesties High Court of Chancery Then and there to answer the premises and further to abide and stand to such order and direction therein as to your good Lordshipp and that Honorable Court shall seeme meete And your Orator shall dayly pray for your Lordshipp etc

This Chancery suit (PRO C2/CHAS I/T39/29) is the earliest in which William was involved. Richard Rowe seems to have undertaken the responsibility for providing the Answer of the two defendants to the Bill of Complaint. While admitting that William Rowe of Stonehouse was present at, and a witness of, the agreement by the complainant to buy the ordnance, the defendants maintained that he was *not partye to the said contract the said ordinance belonging wholye to the said Richard Rowe and he onlye sold the same to the said Complainant Tapson the said Defendant Willyam Rowe having no propertie in them.* The defendants agreed with the terms of the sale as given by the complainant; they believed that William Rowe of Stonehouse had a part of the Fellowship, but the *Complainant Tapson did notwithstanding absolutelye buy the said ordinance himself*, so they could not bring an action against William Rowe of Stonehouse for the said money. The defendants denied that they entreated the complainant to give back two of the pieces or ever took them back; they acknowledged the payment of £40 (£20 to them and £20 to Richard Foot), but desired to receive the residue of the money due for four pieces of ordnance, not for two.

At 18/- per cwt (hundredweight), the price of 98 cwt would have been £88 - 4 - 0, of which William Tapson had paid £40. It would seem that after, according to the complainant, saying that they wanted two pieces of ordnance back, the defendants then changed their minds and refused to take them back; in the meantime William Tapson, if we are to believe him, had bought two other pieces from another source. That there were just four pieces suggests that they were cannon with an average weight of 24.5 cwt; i.e., nearly 1¼ tons each. As a result of this experience William decided to buy out his partner's share in the Fellowship and in another ship called the St. George. However, William Rowe died before the transaction was completed, and William found it necessary to file a suit against the widow, Elizabeth Rowe. All this becomes clear from the third Chancery suit in which William was involved (the second being that of Lappe v Tapson concerning the mill-leat). Only the Bill of Complaint (PRO C2/CHAS I/T45/5) has survived and there is damage to the left side of the parchment; perhaps Elizabeth saw reason and decided to settle before the suit came to Court.

2.8 CHANCERY SUIT: WILLIAM TAPSON v ELIZABETH ROWE

xiij° die Novembris 1634 *To the right Honorable Thomas Lord Coventrye Lord Keeper of the great Seale of England*

Humbly complayning sheweth unto your good Lordshippe your daylie Orator William Tapson of Eaststonehowse in the Countie of Devon merchant that whereas about Five yeares since your Orator bought of William Rowe of Eaststonehowse aforesaid merchant deceased all his parte of Two shipps the one called the St George and the other the fellowshipp for which your orator then in hand paid

him a great somme of money in part of satisfacon and Two hundred and eightie pounds or thereabouts then remaining unsatisfied your orator became bound by his bond or writing obligatorie unto the said William Rowe in the somme of Five hundred and sixtie poundes or thereabouts for the payment of the said somme of Two hundred and eightie pounds at a day long since past which said Two hundred and eightie pounds your said orator shortlie after the entring into the said bond truly and honestly satisfied and paid unto the said William Rowe in his life tyme at severall payments (and the said William Rowe in his life tyme confessed the same and promised your orator to deliver him up his said bonds or Cancell the same Now so it is may it please your good Lordshippe the said William Rowe by his last will and testament made Elizabeth Rowe widow his relict his executrix and dyed and your orator repairing unto her and demanding the said bond of her in freindly manner she the said Elizabeth Rowe refuseth to deliver upp the same or to give him a release thereof contrary to all equitie and good Conscience and giveth out in speeches that she will putt the same in suite of Lawe against your Orator and so intendeth to recover the same againe And whereas alsoe about five yeares since your Orator became ioyntly and severally bound unto one William Elford gent in one bond or writing obligatory in the somme of Two hundred pounds with Condicon for the paiment of one hundred and Eight pounds for Interest thereof Fiftie pounds whereof your Orator had and the other Fiftie pounds the said William Rowe receaved and had from the said William Elford Now so it is that the said William Elford being unsatisfied of his said debt at the tyme of the death of the said William Rowe your Orator repaired to the said William Elford and proffered him his fiftie pounds with forbarance for the same and is still .....?..... the same and afterwards in freindly manner intreated the said Elizabeth Rowe to paie in the other Fiftie pounds borrowed by her said husband with his part for forbearance thereof which contrary to all equitie she refuseth to satisfie, uniustly pretending that she hath no assetts of her husbands estate in her hands unadministred for the payment thereof And the said William Elford .....?..... your orator upon the said Bond at the Common Lawe and intendeth to recover the same from him And the said Elizabeth keepeth in her howse and goeth not out of doores but by stealth And whereas the said William Rowe in his life tyme was duly indebted unto your orator in the severall sommes hereafter mentioned (viz in the somme of Twenty and five pounds being the remainder of the proceede of a voyage made by a Certen shipp called the St Peter whereof your orator and the said William Rowe were owners from Legorne [possibly Leghorn (Livorno) near Pisa] *And in the somme of Nyneteene pounds eight shillings upon the Arrerages of Accompt for the said shipps the George and Fellowshipp, the somme of Fourty pounds which the said William Rowe received for Fraight of the said shipps one third parte whereof belonged unto your Orator and For Twentie Quarters of Salt in the somme of fiftie pounds and in the somme of Nynety pounds by your said Orator disbursed for the said William Rowes use and by his order for the Custome of Suggars belonging to your said Orator And the said William Rowe and for a .....?..... which he had of your Orator at the price of Thirtie sixe pounds in the said somme of Thirtie sixe pounds and in divers other sommes of money due unto your Orator for provisions for shipps whereof the said William Rowe was to pay his part and for monyes due upon accompt from the said William Rowe in his life tyme to the value of one hundred and Twenty pounds more .....?..... your said Orator at the request of the said William Rowe and upon his promise to paie one halfe thereof disbursed for the enlarging of the Chappell of Stonehowse by way of buildinge Fiftie pounds .....?..... the said Elizabeth well knoweth to be iustly due unto your Orator and although she hath byn often tymes requested to come to Accompt and to free the same yett she unconscionably refuseth to doe and performe the same And whereas the said William Rowe was in his life tyme possessed of a Chattell estate of Certaine Lands and Tenements Messuages Courtelages .....?..... situate in Eaststonehowse aforesaid of the yeare by value of Fourtie pounds and upwards for Nynety yeares determinable upon three lives (all which lives are yett livinge although your Orator cannot directly nominate them) which the said William Rowe purchased from S^r^ Richard Edgcombe Knight for a Great somme of money and bestowed about .....?..... pounds in building thereupon Now so it is that the said Elizabeth intending Cunningly to defeate and defraud your said Orator and other Creditors of the said William Rowes just debts and by Indirect courses to inrich herselfe about three daies before her said husbands death he then lying weake and of an Imperfect memory procured the said William .....?..... his said Chattell estate into the hands of the said S^r^ Richard Edgecombe and procured the said S^r^ Richard Edgcombe to grant a New Lease thereof for three lives .....?..... successively in Freehold which was sealed long since the*

tymes one hundred and fifty pounds lost out of my Pockett forty pounds paide my uncle Mr William Tapson• at severall tymes thirteene pounds lost and spent out of the Cashe nine pounds fifteene shilings and twoe pence all which was don and framed merely to give the better Collour hereunto, although in truth there were noe such money paid received and loste unaccompted for or soe lost or mispent at all and havinge thus contrived and plotted betweene them the saide Tither in Trinity terme then followinge repaired unto your saide Orator in London and tolde him that his saide Apprentize had wasted and spent him severall summes of mony and for better testimony thereof shewed the saide note or accompt of the saide severall parcells thereof which he had fraudently gotten signed with his saide Apprentizes hande and lefte a coppy thereof with your saide Orator requiringe your saide Orator to make it good unto him which saide mony soe pretended to be consumed spent and lost (if any were which your saide Orator doeth nott knowe or beleeve was as your saide Orator veryly beleeveth and which he hopeth the saide Tither and his saide Apprentize will uppon their corporall oathes confesse soe consumed loste and spent before your saide orator became bound in the saide Bonde) howbeit the saide Tither entending by Collour of the saide acknowledgment of his saide Apprentize though contrary to his promise and agreement to charge your saide orator therewith and by this undue practize to recover the same from him threatned your saide Orator that except he would compound with him he the saide Tyther would arrest your saide Orator and imprison him here in London and putt him to danger and disgrace unles your saide Orator would give him some newe securitie for the same and your orator beinge fearefull to be hindred in the prosecucon of his lawe suites and other imployment which he then had in London and beinge remote from his dwellinge and not well acquainted in London was constrayned to give unto the saide Tither a newe bond in twoe hundred pounds for the payment of one hundred and twenty pounds or thereabouts at severall dayes since paste and although there was nothing truely due unto the saide Tyther yett your Orator delivered unto the said Tyther one Bille of thirty seven pounds or thereabouts payable to your Orator by a Brocer then living in Olde Woode Streete (whose name nor the direct summe your saide Orator cannot nowe certainely remember) which the saide Tyther received from the saide Brocer for your Orators use and your orator was then alsoe contented to allowe the saide Tyther the summe of threescore and ten pounds which your saide orator had lefte with his saide Apprentize by his direccon and which came to the hands and possession of the saide Tyther or was imployed and converted to and for the use and behoof of the saide Tyther, of which monies the saide Tyther then accepted and seemed well pleased therewith and promised never to sue your saide orator uppon the saide Bondes but to deliver upp the same and duringe all that tyme and ever since hath the saide Tyther imployed his saide Apprentize as well for the takinge in and puttinge out of his monies as other imployments and still reteyneth him in his service without takinge any excepcons to or finding any fault with him And although your saide orator was drawen into the saide first Bond uppon the promise and protestacon of the saide Tyther only to holde the saide Apprentize in Awe and not to trouble or question your saide Orator thereuppon and although the saide second Bond was drawen alsoe from your saide Orator by practize betweene the saide Tyther and his Apprentize or at least by the overswayinge power and command which the saide Tyther had uppon his saide apprentize and not for any iust debt or cause that the saide Tither had, to require and exact soe much mony from your saide orator and although the saide Tyther hath neverthelesse received full satisfaccon and allowance of the saide monyes demanded by the saide later Bonde by the two severall summes of Thirty seven pounds and three score and ten pounds before mencyoned yett the saide Tyther not therewith satisfied hath of late commenced his accon at Common Lawe uppon the saide Bonds or one of them entendinge thereby to recover the penalties thereof from your saide orator contrary to all equitie and good conscience In tender consideracon whereof and forasmuch as the saide promisses and agreements made betweene your saide orator and the saide Tyther were in privatt and the monies accepted by the saide Tyther in discharge of the saide later bond paide and delivered in such secrett and hidden manner that your saide orator cannott pleade the same by waye of Bond to the saide accon or make such prooffe thereof for defence of the saide accon as by the strickt rules of the common lawe is required and forasmuch alsoe as your saide orator doeth not knowe neither can discover what monyes of the saide Tyther his saide Apprentize wasted lost or mispent or when and where without the aide of this honorable Courte to the end therefore that the saide Edward Tither and Richard Browne his Apprentize maye discover and sett forth uppon theire oathes what and howe much of the saide

•See Appendix VI (Addenda).

Tythers proper monies the saide Apprentize wasted lost or mispent and when and howe longe since and what and howe much monies the said Tyther had or received from the saide Brocer or the saide Browne or were by him imployed for his saide masters use and to the ende alsoe that your saide Orator maybe releived in the premisses by the favorable ayde and Justice of this Courte accordinge to the merritts of the saide Cause may it therefore please your good Lordshippe the premisses considered to grante your said Orator his majesties most gracious writte of Subpena to be directed unto the saide Edward Tyther and Richard Browne commandinge them thereby at a certaine daye and under a certayne paine therin to be lymitted to be and personally to appeare before your good Lordshippe in his Majesties high Courte of Chancery then and there to answere the premisses and further to stande to and abide such further order and direccon as to your good Lordshippe shall seeme meete and your Orator as in duty he is bound will ever pray for your honors happines longe to continue

The lawyers must have had a field day over this suit (PRO C2/CHAS I/T35/25). In a long Answer, dated xj November 1635, *Edward Tyther the yonger Cittizen and Grocer of London* denied that *ever hee was at the Towne of Plymouth* or that *hee had any likinge to the said Browne* or that *hee did ever employ the said Browne ..... or take hym to bee his apprentice* or that in Easter Term 1632 *hee did meete with the said nowe Complainante at London* or that *hee had ever any bond from the sayd Complainante of two hundred pounds* or that *ever hee caused the said Browne to subscribe to any such note of accompte under his hand or ever was the said Browne the apprentice of this defendante* or that in Trinity Term *hee had any such conference* or that *the Complainante ever entered into any new bond of two hundered pounds* or that *hee did ever comence any accon at Common Lawe*; indeed *that the Scope of the Complainants bill doth any way concerne this defendante*. Finally he volunteered the information that *hee beeleiveth that one Richard Browne is or lately was apprentice to one other Edward Tyther who is uncle to this defendante ..... but liveth for the moste parte at Northall in Hartford Sheere and sometymes lodgeth at the Griffin a house in Bucklersbury in the same streete wherein this defendante inhabiteth*.

The Court presumably then contacted the right Edward Tyther, but his Answer is not preserved. However, a further document (PRO C2/CHAS I/T37/13) dated 6 February 1637 is headed *The further answeare of Edward Tyther Cittizen and Grocer of London one of the defendants to the bill of Complaynte of William Tapson Complainante*, and was necessitated by a *Reporte lately made in the Cause by Sir Edward Clarke Knighte one of the Masters of this Courte to answeare more perfectly touchinge two pointes of the said bill*. The defendant claimed that *Being heretofore entreated by the said Complainante to take and Accepte of the other defendante Richard Browne for his apprentice and having had such tyme of tryall of hym as in this defendants former answeare is expressed*, he was then asked by the complainant, who had come to London, to take Browne *to bee bound to him by Indentures*. As a courtesy to the complainant he had accepted his offer of a bond for £200, although he *were offered about that tyme ..... fiftie pounds* to take a different apprentice. *Hee neither did Commend nor discommend the said Richard Browne but left that to further tryall of him*. The defendant denied that the £212 which appears to have been wasted and mispent had happened before the *entringe into of the said Bond*. Finally he asked the Court *to bee dismissed with encrease of Costs for this his double and Continuall vexation.*

Another document (PRO C2/CHAS I/T54/3) is *The Replicacon of William Tapson Complainant to the severall answeres of Edward Tyther defendant*, in which he added to the facts in his Bill of Complaint that he did not *at anie tyme entreate the saide defendant to take or accept the saide Browne ..... for his apprentice or did promise to become bounded to the saide defendant for the saide Brownes true and faithfull service at anie tyme before the saide defendant had taken and bounde the saide Browne by Indenture*, and long after that, in Easter Term 1632, was he *drawen into the saide bond of twoe hundred pounds for the saide Brownes true and faithfull service and to paie such monies as the saide Browne shoulde mispende ..... but the saide defendant caused the saide bonde to be antedated* and Browne *a moneth before had since wasted and mispent twoe hundred and twelve pounds of the saide defendants monie*. One further Court document which also relates to this long-drawn-out Chancery lawsuit is a Deposition (PRO C21/T17/3).

2.10 CHANCERY SUIT: WILLIAM TAPSON v ABRAHAM JENNINGS

xv November 1638 To the right honorable Thomas Lord Coventry Lord Keeper of the greate Seale of England

In all humblenes complayning sheweh unto your good Lordshipp your dayly Orator William Tapson of Stonehouse in the County of Devon Marchant That your Lordshipps Orator haveing bine alwaies from his youth trayned and brought upp in the Course of Marchandize and lyveing as a Factor or agent for Marchants in France. Ambrose Jennings of London Marchant and Abraham Jennings of Plymouth Marchant driveing a joint trade in or about the moneth of Aprill in the yeare of our Lord god 1620 did send and consigne unto your Lordshipps Orator being then resident in Rochell in France in the good shipp called the Dolphin of Plymouth One hundred Forty three thousand twoe hundred threescore and seaven pounds weight of Allom which comoditie although the same was recomended and consigned unto your Lordshipps Orator yet your said Orator considering with himselfe the dannger which that comoditie did threaten was very unwilling to encumber himselfe therewith and therefore did refuse to take the said Factory or agensy for the said Ambrose and Abraham Jennings and would not have medled therewith had not your Lordshipps Orator by a course of lawe and by the iustice of that place bine inforced thereunto so that your Lordshipps Orator doth acknowledge that being compelled by the iustice of that place to take into his hands the said Allome and so to undertake the said Factory your said Orator did sell the said Allome at ten livers and ten sous the kintall which made the said Allome to amount unto Fifteene thousand Forty and three livers which doth make English money Fifteene hundred and Fower pounds sixe shillings sterling shortly after which Allome so sold your Lordshipps Orator did returne againe for England and being here arived willing to give unto the said Ambrose and Abraham Jennings a Just and true accompt of and for their said Allome did drawe upp an account thereof and thereby did charge himselfe with the said Fifteene hundred and Fower pounds and sixe shillings for the said Allome And whereas your Lordshipps Orator had paid unto the company of the said shipp the Dolphin in the parte of their wages 138 livers 2 sous and unto Richard Randall maister of the said shipp for 1000 waight of Allome which the said Randall had for his owne accompt amongst the rest of the foresaid one hundred Forty three thousand two hundred threescore and seaven pounds waight 90 livers And reloaden the said shipp the Dolphin with salte the charge whereof amounted to 507 livers 13 sous and sixe deneirs And whereas your Lordshipps Orator had laid out for the provisions of the said shipp 274 livers and sixteene sous And for Canvas to make sacke and other petty charges 257 livers and Fifteene sous And whereas your Lordshipps Orator had returned by bill of exchange payable by Edward Browne of London Marchant 300 livers which they the said Ambrose and Abraham Jennings or one of them did receave and by another bill of exchange payable by Lewes Borce and Luke Debossay French Marchants liveing in London 1000 livers which the said [Ambrose] *and Abraham or one of them likewise receaved and by another bill of exchange payable by William Speight of London Marchant 775 livers and sixe sous and by one other bill of exchange payable by George Langham of London Marchant 1984 livers and three sous and by one other bill of exchange payable by Henry Sowage and the foresaid Luke Debossay 2106 livers and sixe sous, which severall summes of money returned into England by the said Bills of exchange they the said Ambrose and Abraham Jennings or one of them did receave accordingly And whereas your Lordshipps Orator likewise did by the order and direccons of the said Ambrose and Abraham or one of them likewise disburse divers other summes of money and more particulerly your Lordshipps Orator did deliver unto one Robert Cornish maister of the John of Plimpton 475 livers to buy salte and to the same Cornish to buy salte a second time 589 livers and likewise to buy bread and other provisiocons 106 livers and one sous for all which the said Cornish hath likewise long since rendred and yeelded unto the said Ambrose and Abraham or one of them an accompte Your Lordshipps Orator did likewise lay out for salte wherewithall to loade the said shipp the Dolphin the second time and other charges 689 livers three sous and 10 deneirs which salte likewise came to the hands of the said Ambrose and Abraham or of one of them or to the hands of some or one of their assignee or assignes And your Orator haveing receaved spetiall order and direccons from the said Ambrose and Abraham Jennings or one of them to deliver and leave with Thomas Tapson your Orators brother some moneyes for the loading of some shippes with salte your Lordshipps Orator did deliver and leave with the said Thomas Tapson 2300 livers for which the said Thomas Tapson hath*

given to the said Ambrose and Abraham Jennings or one of them an accompt And your Lordshipps Orator did likewise pay in Rochell to one Robert Close uppon a bill of exchange drawne uppon your Orator by the said Ambrose Jennings the summe of 1000 livers All which severall summes of money haveing bine disbursed out of the Allome money your Lordshipps Orator did charge the same uppon the said accompt so drawne upp by your said Orator uppon his returne from Rochell and in and by the said accompt did crave allowance of and for the same and of the summe of 76 livers more which was the remainder of a greater summe of money which was due for a parcell of the foresaid Allome which your said Orator sold unto one Gabriell Pergona who before he paid the same or before your Orator could inforce him thereunto fledd out of Rochell so that your said Orator could never receave the said 76 livers but the same was utterly lost which accompt being so prepared your said Orator did deliver the same unto the said Abraham Jennings and did then acquaint the said Abraham how that your Lordshipps Orator had not charged the said Accompt with anything for the Outflowe and due unto the King of France out of or for the said Allome for that in truth such was the stubborne and rebellious disposicon of the governors and inhabitants of Rochell as that they would not suffer your said Orator to pay anything unto the king for the said Outflowe pretending that he was their enimy and made a protest or defence against your said Orator for the same so that your said Orator had not paid anything for or towards the said Custome but the same did and still doth rest a duty dew and oweing by your said Orator unto the said French king and therefore your Lordshipps Orator did then uppon the delivery of the said Accompt crave allowance for the same or els that the said Abraham and the said Ambrose Jennings his brother should and would give unto your said Orator some good collaterall caution to defend and protect your Orator and his goods against the said French king for or in respect of the said Custome at which tyme your Lordshipps Orator found the said Abraham Jennings very unwilling to give unto your said Orator any collateral security or caution against the said French king or to allowe unto your said Orator the whole Outflowe due for the said Allome but desired rather to compound with your said Orator for the same and thereuppon after some time spent in the driving of the said bargaine it was agreed on by and betweene your Lordshipps Orator and the said Abraham Jennings that whereas the Outflowe of the said Allome did come to 4297 livers and ten sous that the said Abraham and his said brother should and would allowe unto your said Orator thone halfe thereof And whereas your Lordshipps Orator about twelve monethes after your Orators foresaid returne out of Rochell was to receave from the said Abraham Jennings uppon a bill of exchange charged uppon him the summe of 1600 livers which made English money 160li your said Orator receaved only 1000 livers that is 100li English of the said Abraham who retayned thother 600 livers worth 60li English money still in his hands uppon pretence that the same should be applied and allowed unto your said Orator uppon the Finishing of the accompt for the Outflowe of the said Allome so that due consideracon being had of all the foresaid severall summes of money disbursed by and to be allowed unto your Lordshipps Orator as aforesaid And of thone halfe of the Outflowe of the said Allome being 2148 livers and Fifteene sous by agreement dew to your said Orator as aforesaid and of the sixe hundred livers or threescore pounds English money which did and doth still rest dew unto your said Orator uppon the bill of exchange charged uppon the said Abraham Jennings as aforesaid and of Fower hundred and Fifty livers which is iustly due unto your said Orator for his provisicons in disposing of the foresaid Allome and makeing home the returnes thereof there doth appeare that your Lordshipps Orator hath issued out and is to be allowed in accompt the summe of 15868 livers tenn sous and Fower deneirs which maketh sterling 1586li and seaventeene shillings at the least which is enough to pay the One thousand Five hundred and Fower pounds and sixe shilliings due to the said Ambrose and Abraham Jennings for the said Allome and yet there will remaine still due unto your Lordshipps Orator Fowerscore and two pounds and eleaven shillings at the least And yet nevertheless such is the covetous and uniust desires of the said Abraham Jennings the said Ambrose his brother being long since dead as that he hath of late after seaventeene yeares patience brought an accon of accompt against your Lordshipps Orator in his Majesties Courte of Common Pleas at Westminster for the said One hundred Forty three thousand two hundred Sixty and seaven pounds waight of Allome and hath so farre prevailed therein as that at the last Assizes held in July last past for the Cittie and County of Exon [Exeter] *he hath gotten a verdict against your said Orator for the said Allome and doth with all earnestness strive and endeavour to obtaine judgment thereuppon and so to drawe your said Orator unto an accompt for the same although he the said Abraham Jennings doth knowe*

and cannot but acknowledge that the foresaid Allome did owe and ought to have paid unto his majestie of France for the custome there of 4297 livers and ten sous French money which in English money amounteth to Fower hundred twenty and nyne pounds and Fifteene shillings sterling and that the said money for the said Custome of the said Allome is still dew and oweing unto the said king of France by your Lordshipps Orator and that both his person and his goods are chargeable and may be seised uppon by the said king of France for the said duty so that by reason thereof your Lordshipps Orator durst not ever since either to adventure his person or any goods within the Kingdom of France or elswhere where the said king of France hath or may have power or libertie to seise eyther uppon your Orators person or any of his goods which hath tended to thextreame losse and preiudice of your said Orator who hath ever since left his trade in France wherein your said Orator had bine alwayes bredd and bine most verst In tender consideracon whereof and Forasmuch as thage of the foresaid imployment hath almost eaten out all memory thereof and all or the most parte of the persons by whome your Lordshipps Orator could have proved the particuler of the foresaid Accompt are eyther dead or dwell beyound the seas where your said Orator knowes not where to seeke them out or to enquire after them And Forasmuch as your said Orator presently uppon his returne into England from out of Rochell did here prepare and deliver unto the said Abraham Jennings an Accompt of his foresaid imployment whereby your said Orator did charge himselfe with Fifteene hundred and Fower pounds and sixe shillings for the said Allome and did crave allowance of all or the most parte of the foresaid particulers disbursed by your said Orator to be allowed unto him as aforesaid by makeinge the said Ambrose and Abraham Jennings debtors for the same And forasmuch as the said Abraham Jennings neither did nor yet can take any iust exceptions against any one of the foresaid particulers for which your said Orator hath made the said Ambrose and Abraham Jennings debtors but for more then Fifteene yeares did offer the deliverie of the said Accompt did rest satisfied with the said Accompt and did never putt your said Orator in sute or endeavour to question your said Orator for the same so long as the said Ambrose Jennings lived who drew the foresaid bill of exchange for 1000 livers payable unto the foresaid Robert Close and who receaved all or the most parte of the said moneyes which your said Orator returned out of France for England as aforesaid And forasmuch as there hath bine divers other dealings betweene your said Orator and the said Abraham Jennings since the said Allome imployment and divers accompts have passed betweene your said Orator and the said Abraham and in none of the said Accompts the said Abraham Jennings did crave allowance or as much as clayme any thing to remaine due unto him for the said Allome busenes although the said accompts were drawne upp by himselfe or his servants and in one of the said Accompts which passed in or about January 1623 the said Abraham Jennings did acknowledge himselfe to be satisfied of and for a debt of 40li due by your Orators bill which was not then to be found but did promise to yeelde it upp when it should come to his hands And Forasmuch as your Orator hath receaved very greate dammage by the losse of his trade in France worth ten times as much as is demanded by your said Orator for the Custome of the said Allomes is not able to repaire And to thend that your said Orator may be releived against the eager and violent prosecution of the said Abraham Jennings uppon the said action of accompt and may have recompence for the moneyes which uppon the foresaid accompt doth and shall appeare to remaine due and oweing unto your said Orator and may have upp the foresaid bill of 40li to be cancelled and made voide May it therefore please your good Lordshipp the premisses considered to grant unto your said Orator his Majesties most gratious writt of Subpena to be directed unto the said Abraham Jennings thereby commanding him at a certaine daye and under a certaine paine therein to be lymited personally to be and appeare before your good Lordshipp in his Majesties heigh Court of Chancery then and there to answere the premisses and likewise to stand to and abide such further order and direccons therein as to your good Lordshipp shall seeme meete and to stand with equity and good conscience And your Orator shall dayly pray for your Lordshipp in all health and honour long to contynew

This suit (PRO C2/CHAS I/T31/18) tells us that as a young man William had been a factor in *Rochell* — La Rochelle, the Atlantic seaport of western France. A *factor* was a merchantile agent who actually took possession of the goods in which he dealt. Alum, the substance involved in this suit, is a very stringent mineral salt, a double sulphate of aluminium and potassium used in dyeing, tawing skins and medicine, about the handling of which William had good reason to be wary.

La Rochelle developed in the Twelfth Century after the neighbouring town of Châtelaillon was destroyed by the dukes of Aquitaine. During the Hundred Years' War (1337 - 1453) it changed hands between the English and the French a number of times, but was finally captured by the French in 1372. It became largely Protestant at the time of the Reformation. The wars between the Protestants (Huguenots) and the Catholics culminated in the massacre of some 3,000 Huguenots on the eve of St. Bartholomew's Day in 1572; many of the survivors of the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre took refuge in La Rochelle, which became one of the major Huguenot armed citadels in France. Under Louis XIII (1610 - 1643) La Rochelle sided with the English; in this context the resistance of the citizens to the French king, as reported by William, becomes understandable.

The old French system of money comprised the livre, the sou (or sol) and the denier; there were 12 deniers in a sou and 20 sous in a livre. These monetary units, like the old British units (page 13), were derived from the libra, the solidus and the denarius, the units of the monetary system of the Roman Empire. A *kintall* (quintal) was 100 pounds weight, so at 10 livres and 10 sous per quintal the total selling price of 15,043 livres was correctly calculated. The Master of the Dolphin should have received 105 livres, but presumably William took 15 livres as commission; it is not clear why William should have charged the 90 livres to the Jennings' account, since Richard Randall sold his alum *for his owne accompt*. The exchange rate was taken to be exactly 10 French livres to £1 sterling.

The balance of account as presented by William may be displayed thus:

Received for sale of 143,267 lb of Alum @ 10 - 10 - 0 / quintal: 15,043 livres = £1,504 - 6 - 0

Expenditure	138	2	0	to company of Dolphin of Plymouth for wages
	90	0	0	to master of Dolphin for his 1000 lb of Alum
	507	13	6	salt for Dolphin
	274	16	0	provisions for Dolphin
	257	15	0	canvas, etc. for Dolphin
	300	0	0	bill of exchange on Edward Browne
	1000	0	0	„ „ Lewes Borce & Luke Debossay
	775	6	0	„ „ William Speight
	1984	3	0	„ „ George Langham
	2106	6	0	„ „ Henry Sowage & Luke Debossay
	475	0	0	to master of John of Plympton for salt
	589	0	0	„ „ „ for salt
	106	10	0	„ „ „ for provisions
				(the defendant's figures corrected)
	689	3	10	salt for Dolphin
	2300	0	0	to Thomas Tapson for loading ships with salt
	1000	0	0	to Robert Close (bill of exchange)
	76	0	0	bad debt owing from Gabriell Pergona
	2148	15	0	half of 4297 10 0 Customs Duty
	600	0	0	outstanding from Abraham Jenning's bill of exchange
	450	0	0	commission for selling the Alum
	15,868	10	4	= £1,586 - 17 - 0
Owing to William Tapson				£82 - 11 - 0

In his Answer the defendant stated that he had sent a good quantity of alum to Rochell in response to several letters from the complainant advising him that it would sell well there, which he would not have sent had the complainant raised any doubt about the danger of the consignment or of the customs payable. The complainant promised to sell the alum at 12 livres the hundred, but about the same time the defendant and his brother sent alum to another French port where it *yeelded thirteen livers per cent*, so the defendant cannot believe that the complainant was

unwilling to encumber himself with the alum, or that the law of Rochell could compel him to undertake the factory against his will, or that he could be placed in any danger to himself or his goods. For he could have returned the alum to England, or might have paid or compounded for the customs due, or entered the alum in the name of the defendant or his brother, the owners. But the complainant undertook the factory and sold the alum *at what price or rate this defendant knows not*.

On his return to England the complainant had tendered a very imperfect account giving only totals, but no particulars, of the sales of alum made and showing a rate of 10 livres 10 sous per cent rather than the 12 livres advised. The defendant believed that the various bills of exchange had been received by himself or his brother and that the complainant had paid Robert Close 1000 livres. As to the other disbursements which the complainant claimed to have paid out, the defendant pointed out that the complainant had claimed 106 livres and 10 sous for provisions for the master of the John of Plympton in his account, not 106 livres and 1 sous as alleged [this accounts for the tiny error in William's Bill of Complaint], but had not claimed 76 livres due from Gabriell Pergona, having only of late made such a demand. The complainant had supplied salt to the Dolphin, but what he paid for it the defendant did not know, neither did he know whether his brother had given directions to the complainant to deliver money to Thomas Tapson. Moreover, the defendant conceived that he ought not to allow some of the other disbursements alleged to have been paid out.

The complainant had not made any charge in his account for the pretended customs duty, which in his Bill of Complaint he confessed he had not paid, nor had ever been questioned about, nor had suffered any prejudice or damage in the 18 years since. If he had owed such customs duty, he could easily have paid it: he had no order from the defendant not to pay it. The defendant had been informed that the customs duty was 6 sous per quintal [William was actually claiming 3 livres per quintal!], and the alum, being clear of customs duty, would have yielded 1 livre and 10 sous more per hundred. The complainant only demanded money for the customs duty after the defendant demanded the £474 - 16 - 6 due to himself and his brother, even allowing all the complainant's demands. [This figure seems to exclude the 76 livres bad debt and the 2300 livres paid to Thomas Tapson.] But the defendant and his brother had not agreed to allow one half of the 4297 livres and 10 sous for customs. However, shortly after the complainant's return from Rochell, and before the return of his brother Thomas Tapson, the latter had drawn a bill of exchange for 1584 livres and 7 sous, not 1600 livres as stated in the Bill of Complaint, to be payable to the complainant, which money the defendant had a *Resolution* to allow himself, as part of the money due to him, and accordingly acquainted the complainant. The complainant entreated him to pay him £95 which he needed to pay several men, but was content to allow the defendant the residue as part of the money due to him; the defendant agreed to this request. As to the 450 livres commission, since the complainant had not given the defendant a perfect account, as a Factor ought to have done, and had not paid the money remaining upon his own account, he *doth not deserve to have anye provision monie*; but the defendant would nevertheless allow him a reasonable sum provided he would pay the money due on his own account, with interest for the time since it was due and the costs of suits.

William presented the Court with a very short Replication (PRO C2/CHAS I/T63/18) in which he feebly stated that the matters in his Bill of Complaint were *true certaine and sufficient in the law* and the defendant's Answer was *very uncertaine and insufficient in the law to be replyed unto*.

It is hard to know which side of this case, or of any of the others, to believe; the Court must have needed the wisdom of Solomon. One has to bear in mind that we are not reading William's own words, but those of his lawyers; this makes it even more difficult to form an assessment of his character. At times he comes across as far too trusting, even to the point of naïveté; at other times he appears to be an astute businessman, almost ruthless in his dealings; but then, it is the business of lawyers to exaggerate whichever of these qualities may best aid the case. Judging by the large sums of money in which he dealt and the considerable property of which he had to dispose in his will, William must have been highly successful in business. In those times it was quite usual for persons with money or property to be involved in litigation, and we must avoid trying to judge them according to present-day business standards. It will be observed that in all the Chancery cases so far considered, as normally was the case, lawsuits had already been commenced in lower courts.

One obvious cause of disputes was the bill of exchange, the normal method of transferring money before bank cheques came into use. This was a written order from one person, the drawer, to another, the drawee, to pay a stated sum of money to a third person, the payee, the arrangement between the drawer and the drawee having been made in advance; eventually the drawer had to repay the drawee. Also open to abuse was the custom of entering into penal bonds, usually for double the amount of the debt involved, as in William's next Chancery suit (PRO C2/CHAS I/T21/59).

2.11 CHANCERY SUIT: WILLIAM TAPSON v MARGERY ROWE

20 June 1640 To the Right Honorable John Lord Finch Lord Keeper of the great seale of England

Humbly Complayning sheweth unto your good Lordshipp your Lordshipps Orator William Tapson of Stonehowse in the Countye of Devon Marchant, That whereas your Orator and John Edgecombe of Tavistocke in the said Countie Marchant att the request and for the Debt of Thomas Dipford of Plymouth Marchant, and as his suerties about Twelve of Thrirteene yeares now last past togeither with the said Dipford became bound unto Margery Rowe within the parishe of Plymouth aforesaid Spinster in one bond or Obligacon of the somme of Two hundred pounds or thereabouts with Condicon for the payment of the somme of One hundred pounds or thereabouts with ordinary interest unto the said Margery or her Assignes att a day long since past, And whereas also not long after your Orator att the like request and for the Debt of the saide Thomas Dipford and as surety for him Did enter into one other bond, or Obligacon of the penall somme of Fowerscore pounds or thereabouts unto the said Margery with condicon for the payment of Forty pounds more unto the said Margery or her assignes with like ordinary interest att a day also long since past as by the same relacon being thereto had may appeare, And your Orator further sheweth that hee perceaving the said Dipford to grow weake in his estate, Did about Nyne or Tenn yeares since desire the said Margery to putt the said bonds in suite, for that hee meant noe longer to stand ingaged as suretie for the said Dipford in the said severall Obligacons, And thereupon the saide Margery shortly after did sue your Orator on the said Bond of Fowerscore pounds, And your Orator did pay unto her the said somme of Forty pounds with damages and Costs of suite, and tooke upp the said Bond, but your Orator having no Coppy, or note of the said other Bond, The said Margery did not putt the said Bond of Two hundred pounds in suite nor did demand any Consideracon or interest for the forbearance of her said debt of your Orator who was thereupon persuaded that the said Dipford had satisffied the saide debt thereby due, And your orator further humbly sheweth that about Eight, or Nyne yeares now last past he borrowed of the said Margery Two severall sommes of Fiftie pounds a peece, And for the repayment thereof to her with interest did about the same tyme enter into Two severall bonds or Obligacons of the respective penall sommes of One hundred pounds a peece, or thereabouts unto the said Margery with respective condicons for the payment of the said severall sommes to her or her Assigns att a day long since past as by the same bonds also relacon being thereto had may appeare, And your Orator paid her the interest money thereby respectively due, and about Six yeares now last past the said Margery desired your Orator that he would now secure the said Two severall debts of Fiftye pounds and Fifty pounds, whereupon your Orator by agreament betweene them did enter into one bond or Obligacon of the penal somme of Two hundred pounds or thereabouts unto the said Margery, with condicon for the payment to her or her Assigns of the said severall sommes of Fifty pounds and Fiftie pounds in all One hundred pounds att a day long since past, in which bond of Two hundred pounds, both the said Bonds of One hundred pounds apeece were included and ought to bee delivered upp, and was a new security for the same debts, And att the sealing of the said Bond, It was agreed that the Two Old bonds of one hundred pounds a peece for payment of Fiftie pounds should be delivered upp to your Orator, And shortly after the said Margery did deliver upp one of the said old bonds to your Orator, and pretendinge the other was lost or mislayde shee did promise as soone as shee could find the saide bond to deliver upp the same also to your Orator, And about Three yeares now last past, your Orator and the saide Margery came to an accompt for all matters whatsoever then being betweene her and your Orator and she the said Margery then agred, and it appeared that there was only due to her from your Orator the somme of One hundred and Fiftie pounds, and att the same tyme your Orator and Nevill Blight gentleman as his suerty gave bond unto her in the penall somme of Three hundred

pounds or thereabouts with Condicon to pay unto her the somme of One hundred and Fiftie pounds att a day past, And your Orator in the Moneth of January 1637 paide to her, or her use Twelve pounds for the interest of the saide One hundred and Fiftie pounds for one yeare And 18° Junij 1638 hee paid unto her, or to her use Six pounds more for another halfe yeares interest, And on the Twentyeth day of January One Thousand Six hundred Thirtye and Nyne your Orator paid unto her, or to her use the somme of One hundred Seventy and one pounds in full of the said debt of One hundred and Fiftie pounds, and all use, or consideracon due for the forbearance thereof which was accepted as a full payment and discharge of all former debts, and noe other debt then, or lately before demanded, required, or menconed to bee due to her, But now soe it is May it please your good Lordshipp That your Orator requiring the delivery of the said Bond of Three hundred pounds according to her said Agreement and promise, as also the said Bond of One hundred pounds pretended to be lost, or mislaid as aforesaid, shee the said Margery doth not only refuse to deliver the same, but in Michaelmas Terme, now last past out of some causeles displeasure against your said Orator, and a desire to wrong your said Orator, and to bee doubly paide, hath putt the said first menconed Bond of Two hundred pounds in suite against the said Thomas Dipford, your Orator, and the said John Edgcombe, and threatens to take the penalty thereof against your Orator only, whereas the said Bond and debt is wholly paid by the said Dipford, or els there remayneth only some small somme of money due for interest, And seekes now after Thirteene Yeares to take the benefitt thereof, and denyes to discover whither of no the said Dipford hath discharged the said Bond, or what doth remaine truely due to her thereon, And shee having conceaved Causeles displeasure against your Orator doth give out that though shee hath putt all three in suite That nevertheles shee will levy the wholle debt upon your Orator alone, All which is contrary to her agreement and promise against all equity and tends to the overthrowe of your Orators estate, who hath given Countersecuritye for his said suretyes discharge against the saide Three hundred pounds bond, wherein Neverthelesse your Orator is remedilesse save only in this Course of peticon in equitie to your Lordshipp the rather for that the saide Margerye her said agreement and promise the same being made in private betweene themselves which said promise and agreement your Orator can noe way discover but by the Oath of the said Margery in this honorable Court, In tender consideracon whereof And for that it is against equitie that bonds of antiquitye should have Countennance in this Court against sureties, especially where the partye Obligee hath been required by such suertie, and to putt the same in suite in due tyme, But the said Margery by practise and combynacon betweene her and the said Dipford, and of purpose to lay the debt and penaltye of the saide bond upon your said Orator hath forbourne to sue the saide Dipford thereupon who if the said Margery had done and not concealed the said bond, or delayed or neglect after an earnest request to put the same in suite of Lawe, your Orator would have taken some Course with the said Thomas Dipford by suite in Lawe or otherwise for the discharge of the said Originall Bond, and whither the said Dipford hath not discharged the said debt, or what hee can iustly demand upon the said Bond in case the same bee not fully discharged and for what Cause shee hath forborne soe long to putt the said bond in suite against the said Dipford, And that the said Margery for the reasons aforesaid may be Ordered to seeke her remedye upon the said Originall bond against the said Thomas Dipford not against your Orator, And may be also ordered to bring the saide dormant bond and all other the bonds aforesaid being discharged into this Court according to her said agreement and promise upon Oath there to bee disposed of as this hororable Court shall appointe, And that your Orator may bee fully, speedily and effectually releived in all and singular the premisses according to equitie and iustice, and according to the promise and agreement of the saide Margery, May it please your good Lordshipp to grant unto your said Orator his Majesties most gratious writt of Subpena to be directed to the said Margery Rowe thereby Comaunding her at a certaine day, and under a certaine paine therein to bee lymitted personally to bee and appeare before your good Lordshipp in his Majesties high Court of Chancery then and there to Answeare the premisses and also his Majesties most gratious Writt of Iniunccon to be directed to the said Margery Rowe her Councellors, Attorneys and Solicitors to enioyne them from any further prosecucon att Lawe, untill the cause shalbee here in this honorable Court heard and determined, and also to stand to and abide such further order and direccon therein as to your good Lordshipp shall seeme meete to equity and good conscience and your Orator as his bounden dutye is shall ever pray for your Lordshipp in health and happines long to continue

In her Answer Margery Rowe confirmed that William Tapson, John Edgcumbe and Thomas Dipford had entered into a penal bond about 1 November 1627 for £200 to repay £104 on 2 May next and, at a later date, a further penal bond for £80 to repay £40. She *beleeveh that the Complainant and the said Edgcombe had some countersecuritie for the saveinge of themselves harmlesse for that the said Edgcombe in the presence of the Complainant told this Defendant that they knowe howe to salve themselves if they should paie the said debte*. With Dipford *declyneing in his estate* the Complainant had asked her to put the bond for £80 in suit, but *at dyverse and sundrie tymes desired this Defendant to forbeare the said debte of one hundred and fower pounds for that the sonnes of the said Dipford would speedily take course to satisfie the same*. She put the bond for £80 in suit and obtained judgement; eventually she received £40 plus damages from the Complainant.

The Defendant continued to press the Complainant to pay the £104 plus damages, and about twelve months since he asked her to put this bond in suit, which she did; but then the Complainant or Edgcumbe asked her to stay the suit, which she also did under the assurance that Dipford's sons would take some speedy course to satisfy the debt or that the Complainant or Edgcumbe would pay it between them. She has, however, received no part of the £104 although Dipford's wife, Elizabeth, paid damages for the forbearance at 8% for 6½ years after the loan and a further £3; £45 was due to her for the forbearance at 8% in May last besides the £104 principal. [By May 1640, 12½ years after the date of the loan, interest for 6 years at 8% was still owed, less the £3 paid by Elizabeth; this was correctly calculated at £45.]

Margery confirmed the conversion of the Complainant's two bonds for £100 into a single bond for £200; she had delivered up one of the old bonds and promised to deliver up the other as soon as the Complainant paid her the 40 shillings due on it; she denied saying it was lost. But the Complainant had never paid this 40 shillings. About October 1636 the Complainant and the Defendant came to an *Accompte* upon which there rested due £150, together with the 40 shillings and the bond of £200 for the payment of £104. About 12 October 1636 the Complainant and Nevill Blighe became bound to her in a penal sum of £300 to pay £155 on 13 April next. About January 1639 she received £171 in part of the £300 and before that £12 at two separate times. She has received nothing more.

It is not clear whether Margery Rowe, who is described as a Spinster, was related to William Tapson's former partner in the shipping business, William Rowe of Stonehouse, and his kinsmen Richard and William Rowe of Millbrook, although it seems probable that she was — perhaps even his sister. For Margery Rowe states that William Tapson had become bound to her in the earliest of the bonds about 1 November 1627, by which time it would seem that he was already in partnership with William Rowe of Stonehouse, as joint owner of the Fellowship, the St. George and the St. Peter, as is clear from William Tapson's Bill of Complaint against William Rowe's widow, Elizabeth. This Bill (§2.8) also informs us that William Tapson bought out William Rowe's share in the St. George and the Fellowship about 1629, the year that he began his Chancery suit against the Rowes of Millbrook (which is on the Cornish side of the Tamar estuary, across from Plymouth) on 22 June (§2.7); from this suit we learn that relations between the two partners were by then already strained. William Tapson's association with the Rowes was unfortunate to say the least, resulting in three cases in Chancery as well as suits against him in lower courts.

It seems strange, at first sight, that William Tapson and John Edgcumbe should have stood as sureties for the debts of Thomas Dipford; however, Margery's Answer seems to provide the explanation: that they had some countersecurity. So probably this was quite a hard-headed business deal hinging upon the mortgage of part of Dipford's estate, which would pass to them if he failed to pay off his debt; if so, the deal went sour on them because of Marjory Rowe's procrastination or, as William implies, her deliberate intention to cause him difficulties, perhaps as part of the continuing feud between him and the Rowe family. John Edgcumbe was not William's brother-in-law; his name was Thomas. But they were both no doubt descendants of the Cornish Edgcumbes, whose family seat was Mount Edgcumbe, the splendid grounds of which can be seen sloping down to the sea across the Sound from Plymouth Hoe; built in 1553 by Sir Richard Edgcumbe, the house was destroyed in 1941. However Nevill Blight, who stood as surety for William's later bond to Margery, was his brother-in-law.

2.12 CHANCERY SUIT: WILLIAM TAPSON v JEFFERY MILBERRY

xxiiij May 1641 To the Right Honorable Edward Lord Littleton Kt Lord Keeper of the Great Seale of England

Humbly Complayneinge sheweth unto your good Lordshipp your daily Orators William Tapson and Robert Merringe of Stonehouse within the Parrish of Plymouth in the County of Devon Merchants That whereas your Orators in or about the Moneth of January in the yeare of our Lord one thousand six hundred and thirty Five being then Owners of the good shippe called the Reformation of Stonehouse aforesaid of the Burthen of two hundred and Fifety Tonnes or thereabouts did victuall and sett Forth the said shippe to the Isle of May or some one of the Isles of Cape de Veve to take in Salt there And after the takinge in of the saide salte to proceede in the said voiage to the Newfoundland there to make a Fishinge voiage and the said Fisheinge Voiage beinge ended the said Shippe was directly thence to proceede and saile unto the Straights there to sell the said Fishe In which said Voiage one Jeffery Milbery of Marleden in the County of Devon Marriner was Master and had the Charge of the said Shippe and had threescore and Tenne persons with him in the said voiage for the performaunce thereof of Marriners, Seamen, and Fishermen And the said Master and Company went by agreement to have one third parte of the proffitt and proceedes of the said voiage for their Shares and paines And your Orators beinge the Owners and Victuallers of the said Shippe were to have the other two partes thereof for their said Shippe and Victualls In which said voiage the said Master and Company proceeded accordingly and arriveinge att Jenoway there sold and delivered their said Fish and att Gollopola tooke in a Fraight of Oyles homewards And whereas the said Master and Company have had their thirds both of the Traine and Corfish that was made in the said Voige and which was sould in the Newfoundland and of the said Fish sould and delivered in Jenoway as aforesaid and of the Fraighte of the said Shippe homewards yett so itt is may itt please your good Lordshipp That the said Jeffery Milberry the master of the said Shippe or some of the Company thereof by his privity or Connivance in the Newfoundland aforesaid embezeled and Conveyed away Twelve Hoggsheads of Traine or thereabouts made in the said Voiage and a great quantity of dry Fish and Cor Fishe of the value of thirty pownds or thereabouts likewise made in the said voiage and whereof your Orators ought to have had two parts in three parts to be devided for their parts, but by meanes thereof went utterly defrauded and deceaved thereof, and likewise embezeled and Convayed away much of the Victualls and diverse other of the provisions of the said Shippe and in Jenoway aforesaid the master or some of the Companye of the said Shippe by his privity and Connivance embezeled and solde away a great quantity of the said Fish soe made in the said voiage as aforesaid to the value of Five hundred pownds or thereabouts, Whereof your Orators ought to have had two parts in three parts to bee devided, and the said Master or some of the Company by his privity or Connivance as aforesaid solde embezelled and Conveyed away certaine of the Ropes rigginge and a Cable or Cables belongeinge to the said Shippe and whereas your Orators had Foure pownds and Five shilling per Tonne for the Fraight of the said Oyles in the said Shippe homewards as aforesaid whereof the Company had their third parte as aforesaid The said Jeffery Milberry att Jenoway or Gallopola aforesaid without the privity or direction of your Orators tooke aboard the said Shippe eight Tonnes or thereabouts of Marble stones to bee Landed att London and which hee accordingly Landed there and receaved Fraight or some other Consideracon or gratuity for the same to his owne use without ever acquainteinge your Orators therewithall, by meanes whereof your Orators were hindred eight Tonnes Stoweage or thereabouts and were dampnifyed thereby to the Value of Thirty pownds or thereabouts, And whereas your Orators did place in the said Shippe one Leonard Kelly a servant of theirs or one of them and a carefull and honiste man to bee boatswaine of the said Shippe and one Ralph Candish to bee Carpenter of the said Shippe and some other of their servants to serve as seamen in the said voiage the said master knoweinge that as long as the said Boatswaine and Carpenter and servants of your Orators Continued in the said Shippe hee should not bee able to accomplish his said ill designes and acte his said misdemeanors without the knowledge and privity of your Orators which to avoid the said master turned the said Boatswaine out of the said Shippe and dealt so cruelly and hardly with the said Carpenter and other your Orators said servants that the said Carpenter and some others of them for feare lefte the said Shippe and your Orators service and some others of them and of the Company of the said Shippe throughe his Cruell and hard usuage Dyed in the said Voyage, to the dammage of

your Orators of Five hundred pownds or thereabouts, and in London where your Orators said Shippe discharged her Fraight of oyles homewards, the said Master tooke in Forty Passengers or thereabouts into his said Shippe to bee Landed att Plimouth or thereabouts of whome hee had severall sommes of money or other Consideracon or gratuityes for their said Passage and fed them the said Passengers on the Victualls of the said Shippe without ever givinge your Orators any Accompte or Consideracon for the same, and the said Jeffery Milberrye Receaved of Thomas Tapson your Orators Factor in Jenoway aforesaid Fiftye pownds or thereabouts which your Orators are Chargeable with, more hee Receaved in Gallepola aforesaid of the Merchant that loaded the said Shippe homewards with Oyles as aforesaid Fifty pownds or thereabouts which your Orators have allowed the said Merchant since in parte of the Fraight of the said oyles And he received of Michaell Herringe of London Merchant Fifty pownds or thereabouts which your Orators have since allowed the said M Herring on accompte. More your Orators paide unto Thomas Crampporne of Plymouth marchant by his Order Foureteene pownds or thereabouts and unto Richard Gibbes of Plimouth aforesaid sixteene pownds or thereabouts (for which sommes to the said M^s^ Crampporne and Gibbs the said Milberry stood bound and his specialtys were thereuppon delivered him upp) by his Order; And the said Milberry receaved of your Orators by the hands of Thomas Saunders of Plymouth aforesaid Pewterer or of his Assignes Twelve pownds and Thirteene shillings, and your Orators likewise paide unto the said Jeffery Milberryes wife in his absence in the said Voiage and by his Order one hundred Fifty and one pownds and thirteene shillinge or thereabouts; More your Orators paid the said Jeffery Milberry after his Returne in the said Voiage Twenty pownds att one time and to him and his Assignes one hundred and eight pownds and Fiftene shillinges or thereabouts att severall other times, besides divers other sommes of money which they disbursed for him and which hee receaved by their order of all which said severall sommes soe Receaved by him and his Assignes as aforesaid and disbursed for him as aforesaid and of the said Fraight, Fish, Traine and other provisions of the said Shippe so imbezeled and Convayed away as aforesaid the said Jeffery Milberry refuseth to give your Orators any accompt at all, but gives out in speeches that your Orators are indebted to him. In tender Consideracon whereof and for that your Orators are destitute of Releife in the premisses unlesse they may bee Relieved therein by the Justice and equitye of this honorable Courte And to the Intent and purpose that the said Jeffery Milberye may on his Corporall Oath discover and sett foorth the truth of all and singular the premisses and what Traine, oyle, drye Fish, Corre Fish, Ropes, Cable or Cables or partes thereof or other provisions of the said Shippe hee or any of his Company in the said Voiage imbezeled Convayed away or sould, and when, and where and to whome for what, and what money, gratuity or other Consideracon he Receaved of the aforesaid Passengers for their said Passage and what money he the said Jeffery Milberry or his wife or any other by his order and direccon or for his use hath Receaved for and in the behalfe of himselfe and of his Company or any or either of them of your Orators or either of them or of the Marchant that Fraighted your Orators said Shippe with oyles homewards, or of the said Thomas Tapson Michaell Herringe or any or either of them or any other for your Orators accompt. And to the Intent and purpose that your Orators may bee Relieved in the premisses accordinge to equity and good Conscience May it please your Lordshipp the premisses Considered to grant unto your Orators his Majesties most gracious Writt of Subpena to bee directed to the said Jeffery Milberry Commandinge him thereby att a certaine day and under a certaine paine therein to bee Limitted personally to bee and appeare before your Lordshipp in his Majesties high Court of Chauncery then and there on his Corporall Oathe to answere all and singular the premisses and to stand to and abide such further Order and direccon therein as to your Lordshipp shall seeme most agreeable to equity and good Conscience and your Orators as in duty bounde shall still pray for your Lordshipps Long life and Increase of Honor and etc

In his Answer to this suit (PRO C2/CHAS I/T15/26) the defendant denied all charges brought against him. He referred to *one Thomas Tapsam sent as a factor for the sale and delivery of the fish and for ordering of the said voyage to proceed with a convenient companie for guiding the shippe to Genoway where the fish was delivered and sold by the said Factor. but having not goods sufficient there to reload the shippe he Conditioned with the Defendant to pay him for the Charge of the shippe 25^li^ to sail to Galipola 200 Leagues distant to receive fright from some other marchant which he agreed unto and performed accordingly and took in a fright of oyles.*

The defendant agreed with the financial arrangements as set out by the complainants, but denied that he or the company to his knowledge had received their third of the train or corfish, and he had heard that the complainants had kept the money. However, *the master and company did countervail or make up the victualling fish spent between Newfoundland and Genoway the third part which they were allowed*. He admitted that some of the company, but not he himself, according to the custom of sailors at the end of a voyage, might have taken a gallon of train, the whole amounting to no more than two hogsheads. He referred to *fish paid for the passage of M^r^ Thomas Topsam in coming to them to the Newfoundland and fright for a Gunne sent to the Newfoundland unto them.*

In *Genoway* the defendant took in *30 tonne of Ballance* amongst which the factor sent two marble stones which he, the defendant, unloaded in London, *but knew not to whom they belonged nor was he paid for carrying them, and if the factor had not sent the marble they must have gotten other Ballance*. Also, *being in Genoway the Boatswaine left the voyage and went away for what cause this Defendant knoweth not and the Carpenter would not go farther unles Thomas Tapsam the Factor would assure him his Ransom in case hee were taken by the Turkes wich he refusinge hee forsooke the said shippe and manie others went away with him not for anie cruell usage of this Defendant.* The defendant also confirmed that two died during the voyage, one in the Isle of May *being sick within 4 daies after their departure from Plymouth and tother died in Newfoundland after 5 weeks sickness in which time of their sickness or before he never used anie cruell or hard blows or words unto them*. The defendant had taken in about ten passengers in London and *some or all of them put their own provision aboard and for the passage of them the Complainants tooke all to themselves and the Defendant received no money from them*. Moreover, the £50 received from the factor in *Genoway* was for victualling the ship.

Even by present-day standards, this voyage was no mean undertaking. Considerable organization would have been required to prepare the ship, with its crew of 70 men and *burthen* of 250 tons (the burden — the carrying capacity — always being stated in tons), under her master, Jeffery Milberry from Marldon (near Torquay). And the round trip would have taken many months. The first port of call after the Reformation left Plymouth, *the Isle of May or some one of the Isles of Cape de Veve*, could have been the island of Maio in Cape Verde off West Africa; salt is still produced there, and one of the islands in the Cape Verde group was named Sal by the Portugese, their word for salt. Presumably it was cheaper to pick up the large quantity of salt required at source rather than to buy it in England from an importer.

The ship and her crew then had to cross the Atlantic to Newfoundland where the fish, probably cod, were to be caught and processed. Some, presumably the smallest of the catch, was pressed for its oil to produce train, some was dried and some was salted to produce the corfish. Although it is not explicitly stated, the ship must have touched land in Newfoundland, since William Tapson and Robert Merring accuse the master of selling fish there for his own profit and Jeffery Milberry states that *Thomas Topsam* had travelled to Newfoundland in order, one assumes, to arrange the sale of fish there. Then back again across the Atlantic *unto the Straights*, which must be the Strait of Gibraltar; *Jenoway* (spelt *Genoway* in the Answer) must be Genoa and *Gollopola* (or *Galipola*) must be Gallipoli, on the Gulf of Taranto in southern Italy: for after *Thomas Tapsam* had sold the fish in *Genoway* he negotiated with the master to take the ship to *Galipola 200 Leagues distant*; this would be 600 nautical miles, just about the distance down the west coast of Italy and through the Strait of Messina (between Sicily and the toe of Italy) to Gallipoli. Moreover, southern Italy is the place where one would expect to be able to load a cargo of (olive) oil. After that the Reformation had to return through the Mediterranean and across the Bay of Biscay to London, where its cargo from Italy was to be unloaded, and finally back to Plymouth carrying paying passengers.

This was to be William's last suit in Chancery; he died less than four years after the date of this Bill of Complaint. However, his brother John, as one of the executors of his will, still had to fight two more cases in Chancery. Just as his suit against Abraham Jennings provided us with information about William's early life in La Rochelle, so these two lawsuits throw light on his final years. The first of them (PRO C2/CHAS I/T20/52) again concerns one of William's fishing vessels.

2.13 CHANCERY SUIT: JOHN TAPSON v HUMPHREY THOMAS

[Date not legible] *To the Right Honorable the Comissioners for Keeping of the great Seale of England*

Complayninge sheweth unto your Honors your dayly Orator John Tapson of Plimouth in the Countie of Devon merchant Executor of the laste will and testament of William Tapson late of Stonehouse within the parish of Plimouth aforesaid That whereas the said William Tapson by his writinge obligatory beareing date in or about the five and twentieth day of February in the seaventeenth yeare of the raigne of our soveraigne Lord Kinge Charles became bound unto Humfry Thomas of Plimouth aforesaid merchant in the penall sume of a hundred poundes with Condicon thereunto annexed for payment of sixty two poundes tenne shillinges within the space of thirty dayes next after the returne from Avero in Portugall into the porte of Plymouth of a shippe of the Testators Called the William of Stonehouse aforesaid then ridinge in the poole of Stonehouse aforesaid, Which said shippe was then bound to the Newfoundland in a fishinge voiage and after her voiage there ended to retourne to the porte of Plimouth aforesaid one Michaell Martin beinge then master of her for the said intended voiage and it was agreed that in case the said shippe in her said intended voiage should happen by force of weather or leake att sea to bee driven backe or otherwayes hindered soe that shee Could not proceede in her said voiage That then the said William Tapson should pay the said Humphry Thomas or his assignes fiftie poundes within twenty dayes next after such retourne or stay of the said shippe as aforesaid or to that effecte as in and by the said bond and Condition if itt might bee seen itt doth or would appeare Which said shippe afterwards (to witt) in or about the five and twentieth day of March in the said seaventeenth yeare of his Majesties raigne departed out of the harbour of Plimouth and proceeded in her said intended voiage towards the Newfoundland for the takeinge and saveinge of fish as aforesaid where the said shippe and her Company within the space of one moneth followinge arrived and there Continued untill the moneth of September followinge and then the said shippe beinge fraighted by John Hele of Plymouth aforesaid esquire and haveinge taken in her full loadinge of fish departed thence for Avero aforesaid with her loadinge where shee was Consigned and the said Master and Company makinge into the said porte of Avero and intending to saile into the said porte the said shippe by reason of Tempestuous weather strooke uppon the barre there where shee was like to bee Caste away, and by reason of the said tempestuous weather and contrary windes was driven thence into Lisbourne in Portugall aforesaid where the said Master and Company were forced to unloade and discharge their said Fraight of Fish, that soe they might stoppe their leakes and make the said shippe stanch And afterwards reloaded the said shippe with salte, suggar, oile, synamont and other merchandizes of the value of twelve hundred poundes or thereabouts for the Account of the said John Hele, and beinge soe loaden sett saile and departed thence beinge bound for the porte and harbour of Plimouth aforesaid there to deliver their said merchandize and loadinge and in their way thither in or about the twentieth of December in the yeare of our Lord God one thousand sixe hundred fourty two the aforesaid shippe whereof the said William Tapson was sole owner beinge worth eight hundred poundes or thereabouts besides the said goodes and loadinge then aboard her was with her said Master and Company by tempestuous and foule weather forced and driven into the harbour of Falmouth in the County of Cornwall then under the power and Command of S^r^ Nicholas Slanninge Knt since deceased then Governor of Pendennis Castle there and then in Armes against the Parliament. And the said twentieth day of December before the said shippe was come to Anchor in the said porte of Falmouth the said S^r^ Nicholas Slanninge with his forces surprised and seized on the said shippe and her loadinge then aboard her and disposed of the said shippe and of her said Merchandize soe that the said William Tapson who was very well affected to the Parliament and lived in Plymouth withein quarters wholly loste the saide shippe and her fraight to his dammage of fifteene hundred poundes or thereabouts and never receaved any satisfaccon for the same and the said M^r^ Hele who was likewise very faithfull for the Parliament loste all his goodes and merchandize in and aboard the said shippe. Shortly after which the said William Tapson made your orator his executor in truste for his Children and dyed much indebted havinge many poore Children, After which your said orator havinge proved the said will the said Humphry Thomas though the mony lente by him were only fiftie poundes principall and lente on adventure as aforesaid, and though the said shippe were surprised and taken as aforesaid to the utter undoeinge of the said William Tapson and his poore

Children, Yet the said Humphry Thomas hath of late moste unconscionably and Contrary to all equity and good Conscience putte the said bond in suite against your orator att the Common Lawe and intends to obtayne execucon thereon and to take the whole forfiture thereof In tender Consideracon whereof and for that the said mony was lente on Adventure as aforesaid and the said Humphry Thomas by the intencon and agreement of the partyes and accordinge to the Course and practice of Merchants in such Cases was to runne the hazard and adventure of loosinge his mony in case the said shippe miscarryed and were loste as indeede shee was and retourned not to the said port of Plymouth, and for that Cause was to have great benefitt and proffitt for the loane of his mony (that is to say) twelve poundes which is treble the ordinary intereste for forbeareannce of his mony after the rate of eight pounds per Cented, shippes in such voiages beinge seldome wantinge above halfe a yeare or three quarters att moste and for that your orator cannot make that exacte parte of the premisses as by the stricte Corse and rules of the Common Lawe in such case is required his witnesses that should prove the same beinge for the moste parte seamen and some of the Company of the said shippe and att present beyond the seas or in partes remote and unknowne to your orator And to the intent and purpose that the said Humphry Thomas may on his Corporall oath discover and sett forth the truth of all and singuler the premisses and that your Orator may bee releaved therein accordinge to equity and good Conscience may itt please your Honors the premisses Considered to grant unto your orator his Majesties most gratious writte of subpena to bee directed to the said Humphry Thomas Commandinge him att a certaine day and under a certaine paine therein to be limitted personally to bee and appear before your honors in his Majesties high Court ot Chancery then and there to annsweare the premisses and to stand to and abide such farther order and direccons therein as your honors shall seem to stand with and bee most Consonant and agreeable to equity and good Conscience

And your orator shall dayly pray etc

Although the date of the Bill of Complaint is not legible, John states that he had already proved William's will; so that fact dates the Bill of Complaint to later that 10 June 1646.

The William of Stonehouse seems to have been driven about 150 miles off course from Aveiro to Lisbon, and then about 50 miles off course from Plymouth to Falmouth, where it sailed into harbour on 20 December 1642. Pendennis Castle was erected by Henry VIII on the site of earlier fortifications. Describing the succession of Governors of the Castle, Gay* says:

> ..... *and then came Sir Nicholas Slanning of Cavalier renown. Of bravery the young captain had plenty, but the Civil War ravaged the land, and although the Cornish fought valiantly against the Parliamentary troops at Stratton* [in north Cornwall], *they paid the penalty a little later. Slanning, of Royalist fame, was slain in 1643, and the new governor, a man advanced in years, was a more zealous Royalist than ever, Colonel John Arundel, of Trerice.*
>
> ..... *Into a chamber, still called 'the King's room' the unfortunate Prince* [the Prince of Wales, afterwards Charles II] *retreated in 1645, concealing himself betimes in a closet which once existed above. But the Parliamentary troops, under Sir Thomas Fairfax, pressed on, the Prince had to fly — retiring at first to Scilly, and the Castle in 1646, filled with the alarmed townspeople, underwent such a siege by sea and land that the limpets in question on a previous occasion* [when they were scorned] *would have proved a welcome addition to the scanty fare. Supplies were intercepted, the garrison was disorderly, the affrighted inhabitants starving and in want of every necessary of life. Colonel Arundel, not far from eighty years of age, made a spirited but hopeless defence, holding out for some five months against overwhelming odds, and finally surrendered.*

During the Civil War most of Cornwall sided with the King; in Devon the towns, for the most part, supported Parliament although the county generally, led by the gentry, declared for the King. Plymouth, on the side of the Parliamentarians, underwent two distinct sieges: from September to December 1643 and again from April to September 1644, when it was relieved by Fairfax and Cromwell who advanced to its aid from Totnes. It is clear from this Bill of Complaint that William was a fervent Roundhead, for he *lived in Plymouth withein quarters*, apparently ready to take up arms against the Cavaliers.

*S.E.GAY: Old Falmouth Headley Bros 1903

In his Answer Humphrey Thomas confirmed that on 25 February 17 Charles [1641/2] he had lent William Tapson £50 (under a penal bond of £100) and was to receive £62 - 10 - 0 within 30 days of the return of the William of Stonehouse to Plymouth or £50 if the voyage had to be abandoned. [On the basis that the loan was for one year, this would imply a rate of interest, provided the voyage was successful, of 25%, rather more than treble the ordinary rate of 8% as stated in the Bill of Complaint.]

The defendant states that he had heard that William Hele, father of John Hele, and not John Hele himself, fraighted the ship and that, partly by lending money on *Adventure* and partly by *Insureance*, William Hele adventured as much on the ship in her voyage as the ship was worth. The defendant *hath heard that the said shippe ..... was putt off ..... from Avero ..... by fowle weather but never heard nor doeth beleave that shee strooke uppon the barre there or was like to be cast away ..... but that thereuppon the said shippe went to Lisburne in Portugall from whence the Master of the said shippe sent a message by land to Avero to the said William Heles Factor there to know his advise whither they should bringe the said shippe and loadeinge to Avero or not which Factor returned Answeare that Fish was then sold att a better rate and price att Lisburne then att Avero And thereupon the Master and Company of the said shippe unloaded the said shippe att Lisburne and were not enforced thereunto by any such occasion as in the bill is alleadged but either of the free will of the Master and Marriners of the said shippe shee was first carryed into Lisburne or beinge there for theire ease and for the proffitt and advantage of him that fraighted her shee was there unloaden and never went to Avero as by the condicon of the said bond was directed ..... and condicon of the said bond broken.*

Humphrey Thomas states that *this defendent comenced an Accon of Debt in the Court of the Borrough of Plymouthe ..... Iudgement was given for this defendent ..... before any suite commenced in this Honorable Court.* Moreover, *This defendent sayth hee doeth not knowe that the Master and Company reloaded the said shippe at Lisburne ..... or that ..... the said shippe by tempestuous weather was forced and driven into the harbour of Falmouth ..... or that the said S^r^ Nicholas Slannynge with his forces surprized and seized on the said shippe and loadeinge ..... but the said William Tapson told this Defendent that the said shippe was driven into Falmouth And that hee might have the said shippe againe by the favour and assistance of one Nevill Blight his brother in Lawe who was of the Kings party if hee the said William Tapson would give some small matter in mony to these that possest her And this Defendent doeth verily beleeve That the said William Tapson was not very desirous to fetch off the said Shippe and bringe her into the harbour of Plymouth for that hee had taken as much mony on Adventure of the said shippe from the said William Hele and others in the foremenconed voyadge as the said shippe was worth which it seemes hee intended not to pay unlesse the said shippe returned thither, And this Defendent doeth not knowe nor beleeve that the said shippe was worth eight hundred powndes or above three hundred pownds att the most, neither doeth this Defendent knowe that the said William Tapson dyed much indebted but hath heard that his visible estate in land of Inheritance and leased was worth att the tyme of his death neere three hundred powndes by the yeare besides his goodes and personall estate whereby he might provide for his children.*

It is difficult to know whether, as his brother makes out in order to gain the sympathy of the Court, William was financially crippled by this disaster *and dyed much indebted havinge many poore Children*, or whether, as Humphrey Thomas alleges, he had perpetrated a big insurance fraud and died a wealthy man. Certainly, like businessmen today, William had borrowed heavily throughout his life in order to finance his many business ventures, and it is possible that he had over-extended himself financially. There is a Chancery Deposition (PRO C21/T24/6) relating to this suit.

The other Chancery suit (PRO C2/CHAS I/T63/85) in which John was involved as executor of his brother's will was also concerned with events in William's life during the Civil War. Only the Bill of Complaint survives; it is possible that this suit was settled before the Court hearing. The Bill of Complaint itself is in a poor condition and not easily legible. This suit, if we are to believe John's evidence, suggests that William suffered further financial losses as a result of the Civil War, and left many debts to be settled by his executors.

2.14 CHANCERY SUIT: JOHN TAPSON v JOHN TREFUSIS & JOANE DRAKE

...?... February 1651(?) .....?..... of the Greate Seale of England

Humbly Complayning sheweth unto your good Lordshipps your dayly orator John Tapson of Plymouth in the County of Devon merchant That wheras about the month of Aprill in the yeare of our Lord one thowsand six hundred thirty nyne at the instance and request of John Trefusis late of [left blank] *in the County of Cornwall Esq^r^ since deceased and Joane his wife the relict of S^r^ Francis Drake Knt deceased and now the relict of the said John Trefusis also William Tapson late of Stonehouse neere Plymouth in the County of Devon merchant your Orators brother since deceased did become tenant unto and take of the said Trefusis two closes of land wherof the said John Trefusis was seised in the right of the said Joane called or commonly knowne by the names of Louwer Southfeild and the Cruft lying in Buckland monochorum in the said County of Devon To hold the same to pasture untill our Lady Day in the yeare of our Lord one thowsand six hundred forty two and was to pay Quarterly for the same Five pounds and was to yeald the Cruft into the hands of the said John Trefusis and Joane his wife, and was from thence to hold the said Louwer Southfeild to tillage for Fower yeares, the tearme to begin at Michaelmas one thowsand six hundred forty two, and was to pay for every acre of the said Close that was fitt to bee tilled twenty six shillings by the acre to be paid quarterly by even porcons and upon certein other condicons then agreed on and with this especiall proviso that if at the end of the said terme your Orators said brother William Tapson did truly protest that he was a loser in holding the said ground then the said John Trefusis and Lady Joane his then wife did promise to abate twelve pence for every of the said acres during the said terme Also your Orators said brother was to repair the hedges and gates from tyme to tyme hereunto belonging, And the said John Trefusis and Lady Joane his wife were to discharge your orators said brother of all rates taxes contribucons and also .....?..... ordinary and extraordinary paiable out of the same, and wheras by the condicon abovesaid your orators brother was to pay twenty six shillings by the acre yearly It was Agreed that unles your orators said brother should voluntarily and willingly pay the twelve pence by the acre upon prase of the bargaine then he should pay but five and twenty shillings per acre .....?..... Covenant betwixt them agreed on, And your orator sheweth that your orators said brother William Tapson did in his lifetyme well and truly pay all his said rent from tyme to tyme as it became due and performed all and every the agreements on his parte according to the first generall and entyre parte of the Agreement And for three yeares did discharge the last generall part of the Agreement made or demise for the said foure yeares for the holding of the premisses from the yeare one thowsand six hundred Forty two to the yeare one thowsand six hundred Forty six and your Orator sheweth that your orators said brother William Tapson dwelling within the Garrison of Plymouth in the yeare one thowsand six hundred Forty foure dyed there and the warres being very hott and violent in those parts where the premisses lay the said John Trefusis for the safety of his person from the souldiery having betaken himselfe into Plymouth wherupon Sir Richard Greenvill and the Forces under him and others of the kings party Looking upon the said John Trefusis as opposite to their party seised upon the premisses and sequestred and receaved the rents issues and profits thereof for the space of two yeares and upward to their use and the residue of the said rent when the premisses were deserted and freed of the said souldiers the said John Trefusis himselfe in his lifetyme and Dame Joane Drake his wife or some other person or persons to their .....?..... their use or uses have receaved from tyme to tyme as the same grew due by their or one of their direccon and appointment, And every parte of the said agreement which was on your orators said brothers parte* [in his] *lifetyme to have bin performed was truly and really fulfylled and kept accordingly as farr as possibility did permitt and in equity could be expected and required and your orators brother in his lifetyme never qu*[estioned] *touching the same by the said John Trefusis in his lifetyme or dame Johan his wife, Yet now soe it is May it please your good Lordshipps that your orators said brother William Tapson by his last wy*[ll and] *testament in his lifetyme made having constituted your orator thexecutor therof in trust for the use of his children and your orator made probat therof and taken upon him the said Executorshipp therby is become liable to and chargeable with the payment of the debts of the said testator so farr as the Law requires And the said John Trefusis being sithence deceased and by his last wyll and testament having made John Trefusis as his sonn his sole Executor the said John Trefusis the sonn combining and confederating with the said Lady Joane Drake his mother in Law hath commenced an accon att the*

Common Law against your Orator as Executor to his said brother he knowing your orator hath noe sufficient Plea at Law barr therof and therin he prosecuteth your orator as Executor to his said brother for sixty pounds rent as he pretends was arreare upon the first Agreement and foure years rent arreare upon the last Agreement, in all one hundred seaventy pounds which hee intendeth to leavy in Extremity of rigor upon your orator Although the said John Trefusis the executor well knoweth that all the goods and personall estate of your orators said brother deceased were of a value very incompetent and insufficient to discharge his the said testators Debts and are noe more then the iust and true Inventary therof made and upon oath duely exhibited into the Prerogative Court London conteins and noe assetts are in your orators hands and in case they were then this orators brothers debts due upon statutes, Judgements bonds penall and simple are to be paid before this debt due as aforsaid upon a premise of your orators testator, And if your orator is chargeable with the said debt for rent arreare of the premisses if any bee, then hee ought to bee allowed all such funds as in those turbulent tymes were receaved by the said souldiers the most parte of the tyme of the last Agreement and many summes were paid and conveyed in secrett and openly both to the said John Trefusis and Lady Drake his wife and other persons to their use as aforsaid for which your orators brother William Tapson never had any Acquittance, and the taxes and rates which ought to bee allowed arise to a considerable value. All which proceedings are contrary to right equity and good Conscience and tend to the manifest vexacon preiudice and damadge of your orator. In tender consideracon wherof, And for that your orators Witnesses which should prove the premisses are some of them dead others gonn beyound the seas and the rest dispersed into remote places within this Commonwealth unknowne to your orator, And for that the premisses are touching breach of Agreement and non defalcacon of rent and taxes according to the same Agreement and allowances craved for rent receaved by souldiers and for such parte therof as incurred in the tymes of warr when your orators said brother could make nothing nor raise the rent itselfe of the premisses, and touching discovery of summes of money receaved for rent (unknowne to your orator) by the said confederates and some or one of them, which are matters properly examinable and determinable in this honorable Court, And further your orator is utterly remediles touchinge the same unles he bee releived by the Justice and equity of this honorable Court, To the end therfore that they the said dame Joane Drake and John Trefusis the executor may upon their Oathes severally and respectively therin to be taken sett forth and discover what particuler summes of money they or either of them receaved and are by written noates or otherwise ever acknowledged in their or either of their hearing by the said John Trefusis the testator in his lifetyme or by the said Lady Drake to have bin paid and be compelled to defaulk soe much of the rent arreare if any bee as accrewed and did grow due during such tyme as the souldiers aforsaid Quartered upon the premisses and receaved the same, And surcease all proceedings against your orator in rigor of Law touching the same till the hearing in this honorable Court And your orator bee releaved touching the same by the iustice and equity of this honorable Court May it please your Lordshipps the premisses considered to grant unto your orator a writt of subpena to be directed to the said John Trefusis and the Lady Joane Drake therby comaunding them and each of them at a certein day and under a certein paine therin to be limited personally to bee and appeare before your your Lordshipps in the high Court of Chancery then and there to answear the premisses and further to stand to and abide such further order and direccon therin as to your Lordshipps shall seeme meete and agreable to right equity and good conscience. And your orator shall etc

Although the date of this Bill of Complaint is not certain, the mention in it of *this Commonwealth* [1649-1653] proves that it could not have been earlier than 1649. King Charles I was executed on 30 January 1648/9, government by a Council of State was set up on 14 February 1648/9, and kingship was formally abolished on 17 March 1648/9. On 20 April 1653 this Council was dissolved, to be replaced by another Council of State on 29 April 1653. Oliver Cromwell became Lord Protector on 16 December 1653, and held the office until his death on 3 September 1658. This suit also informs us that William actually died in *the Garrison of Plymouth* in 1644/5; his funeral was on 11 March of that year (page 36), so it took many years for his executors to wind up his estate. The semi-legible date on this Bill of Complaint does seem to be February 1651, six years after his death. Arrears of rent for his mills due to the Plymouth Corporation were not settled until the financial year 1649-50 (page 36); these were probably not the mills of the moiety he sold in 1639 (*vide* page 72).

2.15 STATE PAPERS: WILLIAM TAPSUM, HIGH CONSTABLE

From his Chancery suit against Abraham Jennings (page 51) we know that William had to leave La Rochelle soon after 1620. State Papers preserved in the Public Record Office tell us more about his activities following his return to England. A letter (PRO SP16/96, piece 53) from the Earl of Denbigh, William Fielding, Master of the Great Wardrobe, makes interesting reading. Dated 19 March 1627/8, it is addressed *To my very lovinge freind Mr Edward Nicholas*

Mr Nicholas

I have oaften sent oute my letters and warrants for the pressinge of Marriners both to Iustices of peace and Constables the one hath neglected them by theire slowe proceedinge and the other hath by givinge privat intelligence under hand deluded them for when there hath bene hundreds a little before and presently after yet at the time of search we have not found twentie, wherfore I pray you that some examplary punishment may be inflicted on these to the terrifyinge of others that we may herafter goe on with better success which otherwise is impossible therefore I pray you to advertise his Grace that some speedy example may be shewed on these that I have here sent there names, for the preventinge of the like abuse I have sent you but two wher as many more hath committed as greate Contempte and so I rest

Your very lovinge freind
Denbigh

From on bord his Majesties
Shipp the St Andrew
19 of March 1627

With his letter the Earl of Denbigh enclosed a letter (PRO SP16/96, piece 53I) sent to him two days before by William Hill and William Coryton, who had been acting on his behalf. This letter was endorsed *Certificate about William Tapsum high Constable of the hundreth of Roborough*:

Right honorable

According to your honors Command I went to Stonehowse accompanied with the Master and Boatsayne and twoe Boateswaynes mates And according to my warrant repaired to the High Constable whoe was denyed to be at home but I being certefied of the contrary by his owne servant repaired thither againe and by importunity spake with him and shewed him your honors warrant for my assistance and he promised me to be at my lodging or send his deputies betwixt Nyne and Tenne of the Clock at night I stayed past the time and found that neither he nor any of his deputies came Whereupon I sent to his lodging againe and answere was retorned that it was in vaine to call for he was in bed and would not rise And then I sent for Twoe of his deputies who came haveing been formerly warned by my selfe and not haveing any directions at all from the High Constable Neither at my comeing to their howses were they at home But I found in my search that there was notice given, and it could come from none but the High Constable not any other haveing intelligence of those pressings In writing whereof We have hereunto subscribed our names March the xviith 1627

William Hill
William Coryton

A High Constable was an officer appointed to act as conservator of the peace within his hundred and to perform various other duties; the rank was not abolished until 1869. The High Constable of Roborough hundred, whose home was in East Stonehouse, can have been none other than William Tapson. East Stonehouse and the two Plymouth parishes were in Roborough hundred, as was Buckland Monachorum; William had obviously been appointed to the important position of High Constable at some time after his return from La Rochelle. It is not clear, however, why the Earl of Denbigh should have singled out William Tapson when, as he says, *many more hath committed as greate Contempte* (by warning men liable to be pressed into the navy so that they could go to ground before the arrival of the dreaded press-gang). Nor do the records tell us if William received any exemplary punishment; whether he did or not he was soon, as we shall see, embarking on further schemes to make money.

2.16 STATE PAPERS: WILLIAM TAPSON, PRIVATEER

A Register of Warrants for issuing *Letters of Marque or Reprizall* granted by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty from 28 September 1628 to 27 November 1630 (PRO SP16/130) has three entries relating to William Tapson:

(piece 5) *The like was graunted to Willm Tapson and others to sett forth the St Geo: of Stonehowse of about 160 tons Willm Pomeroy Capt & her pynace the of about tons Dat 18 8bris 1628 against Fr & Spa*

(piece 35) *The like was graunted to Willm Topson and Companie to sett forth the St George of Stonehowse 150 tons whereof Nath Waters is Captaine dat 28 8bris 1629*

(piece 41) *The like was graunted unto Willm Topson and Robt Merring and others to sett forth the Fellowshipp of Stonehowse of about 150 tons whereof is Capt dat 8 Mar 1629*

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, Letters of Marque and Reprisal were originally a licence granted by a sovereign to a subject authorizing him to make reprisals on the subjects of a hostile state for injuries alleged to have been done to him by the enemy's army. In later times this became practically a licence to fit out an armed vessel and employ it in the capture of the merchant shipping belonging to the enemy's subjects, the holder of letters of marque, called a privateer or corsair, being entitled by international law to commit against the hostile nation acts which would otherwise have been condemned as piracy. So far as European nations are concerned the issue of letters of marque was abolished by the Congress of Paris in 1856.

In his Chancery suit against Jeffery Milberry, William names Robert Merring as joint owner with him in 1635 of the Reformation of Stonehouse (page 59); the grant of letters of marque show that by 8 March 1629/30 they were also two of the partners in the Fellowship of Stonehouse. According to his Chancery suit against Elizabeth Rowe (page 45), William bought out the share of his former partner, William Rowe of Stonehouse, in the St George and the Fellowship about 1629. At the time of the events detailed in William's Chancery suit against Richard and William Rowe of Milbrook (page 44), he and William Rowe of Stonehouse were still partners in the Fellowship, for which they needed four pieces of ordnance. It may well be that these were needed not just for defence, but because they were fitting out the ship as a privateer vessel; if so, letters of marque would probably have been granted before the start of the register which is preserved among the State Papers.

The bitter feud which appears to have developed between William Tapson and the Rowe family (William Rowe of Stonehouse is stated to have been *neare of kind* to the Rowes of Milbrook) may have been the reason for two of the entries in another document to be found among the State Papers (PRO SP16/535, piece 149); this document, which is undated, is headed *Causes spetially appoynted to bee heard this sitting day*, but unfortunately the court is not named. One entry names as plaintiff Richard Rowe (Cornwall); the defendants are William Tapson, Elizabeth his wife, Robert Creese constable, Robert Cloake, George Angell, Richard Browne and John Martyn constable, who are accused of *Riotts Routts Unlawfull assemblies Wounding the plaintiff and other offences.* Another entry names William Tapson (Devon) as plaintiff; and this time the defendants are Gregory Rowe gent, Richard Rowe gent, Christopher Rowe gent and John Rowe, jointly accused of *Riotts Routts unlawfull assemblies conspiracies unlawfull challenges and other offences.* One pictures the Tapson faction and the Rowe cabal engaged in a shouting match leading to fisticuffs, the fracas ending with each party bringing a lawsuit against the other. The inclusion of *Richard Browne* in the list of William's supporters is interesting, for that was the name of William's *kinsman* named in his Chancery suit against Edward Tyther (page 48), the young man who, among other extravagances, squandered £150 *at the Tennes Court*. William Rowe too was a privateer and had been granted letters of marque (PRO SP16/115 piece 110, SP16/130 piece 36). In a letter to Edward Nicholas (page 67) Sir James Bagg refers to William Rowe as *a man of most disobedient spirit* for taking a French bark since the peace and converting her to his own use without adjudication or acknowledgement of any duties to his Majesty (PRO S16/159 piece 30). William Rowe was also in trouble with the authorities for resisting a warrant of Sir James Bagg (PRO S16/65 pieces 30, 31) and for detaining four men who were pressed out of his ship (PRO SP16/98 piece 94, SP16/117 piece 37).

2.17 WILLIAM'S SUCCESSORS*

Two children of William's elder son Richard were baptized at Stoke Damerel, the parish immediately to the north of East Stonehouse:

24 Oct 1654 John son of Richard Tapson of Stonhouse
5 Jul 1660 Richard son of Richard Tapson

and another two at Plymouth St. Andrew:

25 Feb 1652 Mary dau of M^r^ Richard Tapson of Stonhouse
24 May 1664 William son of Richard and Mary Tapson

The churches of Plymouth St. Andrew, Plymouth Charles the Martyr and Stoke Damerel, as well as the chapel of East Stonehouse, were all within easy walking distance of each other. [Anyone wishing to find these baptisms in the Stoke Damerel parish register should note that entries between 26 August 1654 and 12 April 1661 have been inserted out of their correct sequence and upside-down.] This *Richard Tapson of Stonhouse* is presumably the *M^r^ Rich Tapson* who paid tax on five hearths in 1674 at *Eastone House* (page 20).

Included among the early State Papers is a letter, dated 18 April 1654, from the Sub-Commissioners for prize goods at Plymouth to the Commissioners of the Admiralty and Navy (PRO SP18/81, piece 133), detailing goods found which had been embezzled from prize ships in the port of Plymouth — cable, *lanthornes* [lanterns], lead pegs, pepper, sails, canvas and hemp — together with the names of the chief delinquents. Enclosed with the letter were depositions (piece 134) from eleven men concerning stores embezzled from the James of Brest, the Dolphin, the Satisfaction and another prize ship and sold to named persons residing at Plymouth and East Stonehouse. The first of these depositions was from Richard Tapson:

> *The Examinacon of Richard Tapson of East Stonehouse in the Countie of Devon taken before Iustinian Peare George Blake Daniel Ely Sub Commissioners for prize goods Lieutenant Sampson Larke and James Blackburne by vertue of a Commission to them directed from the Honorable the Commissioners of Admiralty and Navey, the Fifth Day of Aprill 1654*
>
> *uppon his oath*
>
> *The said Examinee beinge demanded to the matters and effects in the said Commission Contained saith That about a Weeke after the Friggatt James of Brest was brought into the Port of Plymouth by the Constant Warwicke Commannded by Captain Potter this Examinee was in Company with one Robert Toope of Stonehouse aforesaid Rope Layer and this Examinee acquaintinge the said Toope that hee had beene onboard the said shippe James And that the waiter which was putt aboard the said Friggatt would not permitt this Examinee to stay onboard her the said Toope tould this Examinee that hee was informed that the said waiter had sould a saile belonginge to the said Friggatt And that hee did beleeve hee the said waiter had sould alsoe some Lead But saith hee did not acquainte him this Examinee what the persons were that did soe informe him the said Toope thereof And saith the said Waiters name is William Phillipps (as hee this Examinee is informed) And beinge demannded whether hee doth not knowe or hath heard of any goods or merchandize or of any provisions tackle apparrell or Furniture of any shippe or shippes prize or prizes belonginge to the Common Wealth bought by any person or persons whatsoever heretofore saith hee doth not*

It is not made clear whether Richard was on board the James of Brest to look around the ship out of curiosity (or even to see what he could pilfer) or whether he was acting in some sort of official capacity; however, he tells us that the *waiter* (the watchman) ordered him off, so the first alternative seems the more likely, though there is no suggestion in the letter that he was one of the delinquents. Richard grew up in a world of ships and shipping; he would have been nearly 16 when his father died and probably already involved in his father's business. The deposition indicates his continuing interest in ships and in prize vessels and their cargoes captured from the enemy. He would have been 41 when a Richard Tapson was granted his first commission in the Royal Navy as Second Lieutenant on the Adventure on 15 September 1670 (page 26); so it may be that any conjecture that he

*Vide the branch of the family tree facing page 78.

was that Richard should be ruled out on account of his age. But in the days before continuous service it was normal for a man to move between the Royal Navy and merchant ships, wherever he could obtain a berth, and such a late age was not unusual for the granting of a first commission in the Royal Navy. So it is quite likely that William's son Richard may have been a captain on merchant vessels and that he may even, like his father, have been a privateer and therefore accustomed to sea combat. Weight is given to this theory by the fact that Second Lieutenant Richard Tapson was appointed Captain of the Mermaid within three years of his first commission as Second Lieutenant, which is unlikely to have happened if he had still been a young man inexperienced in seamanship, in leadership and in naval combat.

If it was William's son who was Captain of the Mermaid, and later of the Adventure, then his son, Lieutenant Richard Tapson of the Adventure, must have been William's grandson, who (assuming he had been baptized soon after his birth) would have been 18 when he received his first commission, 21 when he married (page 24) and about 22 when he died aboard the Reserve. And the marriage at Stoke Damerel:

16 Oct 1692 William Tapson and Frances Mark both of St. Andrews parish plymouth

may well have been that of (Captain?) Richard Tapson's youngest son, who would have been 28 at the time. The marriage was followed by a baptism at Plymouth St. Andrew:

7 Mar 1693 William son of William & Tapson Sto

This William baptized on 7 March 1693/4 would have been 24 at the time of the marriage at Plymouth St. Andrew:

6 Oct 1717 William Tapson & Mary Treys

This marriage was quickly followed by baptisms at Stoke Damerel:

21 Sep 1718 George son of William & Mary Tapsham
15 Jan 1720 George son of William Tapson and Mary
21 Mar 1721 William son of William Tapson & Mary
28 Apr 1723 Elizabeth dau of William Tapson & Mary
7 Dec 1724 George son of William Tapson & Mary
11 Jun 1726 Ann dau of William Tapson & Mary
17 Jul 1727 Richard son of William Tapson & Mary
8 Sep 1728 Phanny dau of William Tapson & Mary
18 May 1730 Mary dau of William Tapson & Mary

and by the burials at Stoke Damerel:

12 Oct 1718 George Topsham
17 Dec 1719 Nicholas Tapson
7 Mar 1720 George Tapson
10 Nov 1729 William Tapson

The two Georges whose burials are recorded were probably the first two children of William and Mary to be baptized; Nicholas may have been another child of theirs, born between 21 September 1718 and 15 January 1720/21. The burial on 10 November 1729 must refer to William himself, for it has to be his widow referred to in a marriage allegation dated 12 July 1731:*

Thomas Colley gent ad Regia Navim Norfolk spectant & Mary Tapson of Stoke Damerel widow

The wedding took place the next day at Plymouth St. Andrew, where Mary had first been married. [The Latin *ad Regia Navim Norfolk spectant* means *belonging to the Royal Ship the Norfolk*.]

The baptism at the church of Plymouth St. Andrew:

12 Nov 1658 Elizabeth dau of William Tapson Ston

must have been that of a child of (Captain?) Richard Tapson's younger brother, then aged 25; no further information about him has so far come to light, and he did not pay Hearth Tax in Devonshire in 1674. The Robert Tapson who died on the Adventure was said to be a *cousin* of Richard Tapson who died on the Reserve (page 24); if he was a cousin in the modern sense of that word then, provided our earlier conjectures are correct, he would have had to be a son of this William, and thus a nephew of Captain Richard Tapson. However, he may have been a more distant relative (page 79).

*J.H. MANN: Exeter Marriage Licences 1631-1762

CHAPTER 3

DIVERS EARLY TAPSONS

3.1 JOHN TAPSON OF PLYMOUTH, MARCHANT*

A marriage at the church of St. Andrew, Plymouth:

2 Jul 1627 John Tampson & Elizabeth Bande

was followed by a baptism, also at the church of St. Andrew:

2 Nov 1631 Hanna dau of John Tapson.

The John Tapson baptized in Buckland Monachorum on 6 February 1595/6 would have been 31 at the time of this marriage, so it seems highly likely that these entries refer to him; that is, to William's brother whom we have so far met only as an executor of William's will. It was no doubt the same John who, along with his brother William, signed the Protestation Oath at Plymouth in 1642 (page 19). And under the heading *The Names of Freemen and in whose Majoralties they were Admitted*, the Plymouth *Black Book* (page 43) contains a list of the freemen admitted during the Mayoralty of *Austinium Peace Marchant Major 1644* which includes one *Jn^o^ Tapson*; this too would seem to refer to William's brother.

John's name appears again in the register of St. Andrew, Plymouth, in the section headed *Publication of* [Marriage] *Contracts*:

19 Jan 1654 Nicholas James of this Towne widdower and Katterne Skinner servant unto M^r^ John Tapson of this towne

And John's daughter, Hannah, would have been 25 years old when the marriage took place, also in the church of St. Andrew, Plymouth:

14 Jul 1657 Phillip Harris & Hanna Tapson

Although, to judge from the evidence available, John was less of an entrepreneur than his elder brother, one document has survived (DRO Z12/31/13) which shows that on Lady Day 1648, three years after his brother's death, John and a business partner took over the residue of the lease on the mills which William had sold to Stephen Trevill in 1639 (page 37). An abstract is now given:

*Vide the branch of the family tree facing page 78.

Assignment of Lease dated 25 March 1648 (Abstract)

Indenture dated 25 March, 23 Charles, between

1. Stephen Trevill of Rame, Cornwall, gent
2. John Tapson and George Gaire of Plymouth, yeoman

Recites the indenture of 10 August, 35 Elizabeth, concerning the lease of Griffins Parke, a close adjoining the Tavistock road, Malt Mill Close, and mills, to Sir Francis Drake Kt (page 37).
Recounts the subsequent erection of two tucking mills (page 37).
Recounts the transfer to Sir Francis Drake Baronet (page 37).
Recites the indenture of 14 November, 7 Charles, transferring a moiety to William Tapson (page 37).
Recites the indenture of 26 December, 15 Charles, transferring the moiety from William Tapson to Stephen Trevill of Plymouth, *father of the said Stephen party to these presents*.
Recounts the transfer of the moiety from Stephen Trevill, the father, to Stephen Trevill, the son.
Witnesses that Stephen Trevill, the son, *in Consideracon of the yearely rente heareafter in these premisses expressed ..... hath given granted assigned transferred and sett over ..... unto the said John Tapson and George Gaire ..... the aforesaid moyety or halfendeale of ..... the aforesaid premisses (except Malt mill Close) .....Yieldinge and payinge therefore yearely unto the said Stephen Trevill ..... the ..... sume of one hundred sixtie five pounds ..... dureinge the residewe of the aforesaid term Unto the Maior and Comminalty of the Borrough of Plymouth aforesaid one moyety of the said Thirtie fower pounds three shillings and fower pence rente*. Maintenance conditions and penalties for non-compliance are imposed.

In his signature John's associate spells his name *Gayer*. Since the lease on these mills had remained in the Trevill family, it would seem that the mills which William was renting from the Plymouth Corporation at the time of his death (page 36) were not the same. In his Answer to the Chancery suit brought by Richard Lappe (page 42) William states that the *Maior and Cominaltie* had purchased one moiety of the mills on Plymouth Leat and that he had purchased the lease on (a moiety of) the other moiety (originally, as we know, in the possession of Sir Francis Drake); so the rent arrears were probably on mills of the moiety retained by the *Maior and Cominaltie*.

3.2 CHANCERY SUIT: ROBERT BENHAM v THOMAS TAPSON

27 Nov 1629 To the right honorable Thomas Lord Coventrie Lord Keeper of the great Seale of England

Sheweth unto your good Lordshipp your Orator Robert Benham of Ipswich in the county of Suffolk marchant That wheras one William Rudd of Ipswich aforesaid marriner beinge Master of a shipp called the esperance of Ipswich which was about the moneth of October 1624 rydinge at Ancher in the river of Orwell within the porte of Ipswich aforesaid and the said William Rudd beinge at the same time bound forth on a voyadge with the said shipp unto Rochell in the kingdome of France and your said Orator beinge well acquainted with the said Rudd and he the said Rudd beinge willinge to doe any good office that he could for your said Orator he your said Orator therupon in the said moneth of October 1624 shipped aboard the said Shipp of the proper goods of your Orator six halfe broad clothes of coller scarlett in graine and one halfe broad cloth in graine beinge together lxx^{li} or therabouts in England. And your said Orator therupon gave direccons unto the said William Rudd to sell the said halfe broad clothes at Rochell aforesaid for xxx French crounes apeece in present money and not under and that if he cold not sodenly after his arrivall att Rotchell aforesaid and before his cominge away from thence make sale therof at the same prises that then he should leave the same clothes with some honest marchant or Factor there to be sould at the same prizes for the behoofe of your Orator and to retorne the monies therof proceeding by exchange for England to be paid unto your said Orator at London or at Ipswich aforesaid unto one John Saker marchant for the use of your said Orator or otherwise if the said clothes could not be sould at the prises aforesaid that then the said clothes should be retorned to Ipswich or London unto your said Orator or unto the said

John Saker for the use of your said Orator which said clothes the said Rudd received of your said Orator for the purposes aforesaid And therupon the said Rudd in the said moneth of October departed with the said shipp and halfe broad clothes from the port of Ipswich aforesaid and safely arived with the said shipp and clothes at Rotchell aforesaid in or about the moneth of November then next followinge and al the said clothes were soe landed and offered to be sould by the said Rudd and the said Rudd beinge sodenly to retorne againe with the said shipp for England and not obtaininge the said prices of 30 crownes a peece for the same he the said William Rudd did therupon leave the said seaven halfe broad clothes with one Thomas Tapson an English marchant whoe then lived at Rochell aforesaid and was both marchant and factor there and was well acquainted with the said Rudd and the said Rudd left order with the said Tapson for the sale of the said clothes at the prizes aforesaid or neare therabouts and that the monies arisinge therof should be retorned by way of exchange unto England to be paid unto your said Orator or otherwise unto the said John Saker for your Orators use and that in case the said clothes cold not be sould at the price left with the said Tapson by the said Rudd that then he the said Tapson should retorne the said clothes for England unto your said Orator or unto the said Saker for your Orators use accordinge to the direccons formerly geven unto the said Rudd as aforesaid with said clothes then said Tapson or some other for him or by his appointment had and received of the said Rudd accordingly for the intents aforesaid and faithfully promised the said Rudd to performe the trust in him reposed concerninge the same and the said Clothes being soe left with the said Tapson for the purposes aforesaid he the said Rudd shortly after retorned unto England with the said Shipp and not longe after his retorne he the said Rudd made it knowne unto your said Orator that he had left all the said halfe broad clothes with the said Tapson as aforesaid and had left such direccons with him concerninge the same as is before declared And withall affirmed unto your said Orator that the said Tapson was an honest man and would deal well with your Orator touchinge the said clothes and therupon your said Orator relied nothinge doubtinge of the faire and honest dealinge of the said Tapson in respect he was a factor for divers English marchants and one which (as your said Orator was informed) seemed to make a conscience in his dealings. But soe it is that the said Tapson havinge gott the said clothes into his possession or disposinge he therupon converted the same to his owne use and disposed and made sale of them as his pleasure and continued att Rotchell aforesaid about 2 yeares after he had received the said clothes and yet the said Tapson in all that tyme notwithstandinge the direccons aforesaid left with him by the said Rudd and that he the said Tapson well knewe that the said clothes were the proper goods of your said Orator and was to give accompt of them unto your said Orator or unto the said Saker as aforesaid hath not in any kinde geven knowledge unto your said Orator or unto the said John Saker for which prizes he the said Tapson or any other by his appointment sould the said clothes of what he hath done with them as of right he ought to have done and accordinge to the direccons left with him by the said William Rudd and the trust in him reposed and his promises made unto the said Rudd concerninge the same since which times the said Tapson as your Orator was informed retorned unto England about two or 3 yeres past and hath ever since lived in a remote place in the West countrie att or neare plimoth in county devon and therupon your said Orator did as well by letters as by messengers often in frendly manner require and intreat the said Tapson to give an accompt unto your said Orator for the said clothes and to give him satisfaccon for the same if they were sould if not then to deliver the same halfe broad clothes backe unto your Orator. but the said Tapson beinge as it seemeth a man of corrupt conscience and mindinge and intendinge to defeate your said Orator of the said clothes and the proceed therof hath not geven any accompt or satisfaccon for the same unto your said Orator but hath and as yet doth refuse and neglect to doe contrary to all equity and good conscience In tender consideracon wherof the premises considered and forasmuch as your Orator by the stricte rules of the common lawe is utterly remediles in the premisses for want of testimony to prove the delivery of the said clothes unto the said Tapson in respect the said Rudd is dead and to the end that the said Tapson may upon his corporall oathe set forth the truth of all and every the said premisses and whether he or some other for him or by his appointment did not receive the clothes aforesaid to the purposes before set forth or otherwise and whoe by name soe received the same and what and whowe many halfe broad clothes were soe left att Rotchell aforesaid by the said Rudd with the said Thomas Tapson or any other for him and what direccons the said Rudd left with the said Tapson concerninge the sale of the said clothes and the retorne of the proceede therof unto your said Orator or unto the said Saker

for your Orators use or otherwise and at what rate or prises and that the said Tapson may set forth what is become of the same halfe broad clothes and of every of them and howe he hath disposed therof and the true rate they and every of them were sold for and put on and at what tymes and to whome and what benefitt have bene made or gained therby by sale or otherwise over and above the 70li value aforesaid and what they were truely worth at Rotchell aforesaid and to the end that the said Tapson may by the aide of this honorable court be enioyned to give satisfaccon unto your said Orator for the said halfe broad clothes and the benefitt made of them with reasonable damage for the forbearance therof. may it please your Lordshipp to grant unto your Orator his majesties most gracious writt of subpena to be directed unto the said Thomas Tapson therby commandinge him at a certaine day and under a certaine paine therin to be limited personally to appeare before your Lordshipp in his majesties high court of Chancery then and there to answere the premisses And further to stand to and abide such order therin as to your Lordshipp shall seeme meete

Broad-cloth was a finely-woven fabric of high quality; *in grain* means that the cloth had a fast dye. *Crown* was the name commonly used at this period for the French écu, a coin of variable relationship to the livre.

This Bill of Complaint (PRO C2/CHAS I/B119/8) was followed by an equally long Answer (PRO C2/CHAS I/B122/30), which makes the most of the fact that the complainant's only witness, William Rudd, was already dead. Thomas informs the Court that he was a merchant and factor in France in 1624 and long before that, dealing with great sums of money and keeping his good name and credit with all merchants, but that he had never had any dealings with the complainant. William Rudd had asked him to sell the broad-cloths for himself, at the best rate he could, not mentioning that they were the broad-cloths of the complainant, Benham, or stating any price at which they were to be sold. Rudd had told him to return the money by a bill of exchange (or, if they could not be sold, to return the broad-cloths) to himself at Ipswich.

Shortly after Rudd's departure, Thomas explains, and before the broad-cloths could be sold, Rochell was besieged by the King of France and there was an *imbargo* which lasted almost a year and a half, during which time the broad-cloths *became much the worse for theire longe lyinge unsold*. After the siege he had been taken sick at Rochell and forced to return to England to recover his health, before which he had sold some of the broad-cloths for 26 crowns and later some for 27 crowns; pieces not sold were left at Rochell with one Leonard Carswell. He, the defendant, had intended, after recovering his health, to return to Rochell, but times remained bad there for merchants so he *durst not adventure thither again*. Since his arrival in England he had lived at Stonehouse, but had employed Leonard Carswell, a merchant and factor, for the management of all his business there. It remained his intention to return to Rochell and to send Rudd £30 now in the hands of Carswell.

Soon after his arrival in England, the defendant adds, he had had a meeting with Rudd and had explained the situation. Rudd, who knew Carswell, had still not said that the broad-cloths were the goods of the complainant, from whom, contrary to his allegations in the Bill of Complaint, the defendant had received only one letter.

The situation at La Rochelle (page 54) had come to a head when, in order to assist the Protestants there, Charles I's first minister, the Duke of Buckingham (who in his younger days was considered the handsomest man in Europe and, as the boy-friend of Charles I's father, James I, rose to become his first minister) invaded the Île de Ré, the island off La Rochelle; whereupon Cardinal de Richelieu, first minister of the French King, Louis XIII, besieged the town of La Rochelle and built a vast sea wall to prevent English ships from relieving their allies. After 15 months of siege (1627 - 1628) the town capitulated, three quarters of its citizens having starved to death. It is not surprising therefore that Thomas had been unable to sell the six half broad-cloths during this period and that he then needed to return to England to recover his health; indeed, he was lucky to have survived. On the other hand, if Thomas had received the broad-cloths well before the siege began, as the complainant implies, one wonders why he had not already sold them; perhaps conditions in the years before the siege were so bad that there was no demand even then for luxury items.

3.3 THOMAS TAPSON OF BRATTON CLOVELLY, FACTOR

Thomas's Answer to the Chancery suit was signed by his brother William, the signature being very similar to that written a decade later on the 1639 indenture (page 37). It would seem that very soon after his return to England, and the commencement of the lawsuit, Thomas decided to marry: for a marriage allegation dated 18 March 1629/30* named

Thomas Tapson merchant of Plymouth Devon & Agnes Icledon of Bratton Clovelly Devon

The name of Thomas's bride should have been given as *Anne Incledon*. The armigerous Incledon family of Bratton Clovelly, according to the *Original Visitation of Devon 1620* (page 105), claimed a pedigree dating back to 1160; Anne was daughter and heir of John Incledon, her age in 1620 being recorded as 14 years.

Bratton Clovelly, in Lifton Hundred, is about seven miles west of Okehampton, just to the north-west of Dartmoor. The much-restored church was built about 1375 in the Decorated Style. The parish registers, although they survive from 1555, are not in a good state of preservation for most of the Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries; the bishop's transcripts are usually more legible than the registers, but survive only spasmodically. Furthermore, entries in the registers were carelessly made during the period immediately following the marriage of Thomas Tapson and Anne Incledon; thus, for instance, the baptism of Thomas, which in the parish register is dated 22 September 1633, is given as 18 October 1633 in the bishop's transcripts. The situation is yet further complicated by the appearance in Bratton Clovelly of another Tapson, Robert, at about the same time (page 85). However, the following are the entries which refer to Thomas's branch of the Tapson family:

Baptisms

22 Sep 1633	*Thomas*	*son of Thomas & Anne Tapson gent*
Dec? 1635	*John*	*son of Thomas & Anne Tapson*
6 Dec 1639	*Margaret*	*dau of Thomas & Anne Tapson*
31 Oct 1641	*John*	*son of Thomas Tapson & Anne*
11 Mar 1645	*Hanna*	*dau of M^r^ Tho: Tapson*

Burials

20 Dec 1631	*The son of Thomas Tapson gent, not baptized*	
7 Apr 1645	*Margaret*	*dau of Thomas Tapson*
8 Aug 1648	*Ann*	*dau of Thomas Tapson gent*
6 Aug 1664	*Frances Tapson wife of Thomas Tapson gent*	
24 July 1665	*Thomas Tapson gent*	

The Ann buried in 1648 was perhaps Hanna; it is interesting that Thomas should have named a daughter Hanna, the name of his niece, daughter of his brother John. There is no burial entry in the Bratton Clovelly register for the John baptized in 1635, yet he must have died before the baptism of the second John in 1641; nor is there a burial entry for Anne, Thomas's wife. The Frances Tapson buried on 6 August 1664 could have been a second wife or, more likely, the wife of Thomas Tapson junior; the Thomas buried less than a year later was therefore most probably Thomas Tapson junior, then only about 31 years old, for if he and his father had both been living in Bratton Clovelly at the time the rector would surely have distinguished between them.

Even after his marriage Thomas Tapson senior was working as a factor, for we know that he was in Newfoundland and in Italy in 1636 (page 59). He signed the Protestation Oath at Bratton Clovelly in 1642 (page 19), but it seems likely that neither he nor Anne were in that parish when they died. Possibly Thomas Tapson senior died before 1664, so that, prior to the burial of Frances, his son had inherited the Incledon properties and the title of *gent* to go with them.

*J.L. VIVIAN: Index of Exeter Diocese Marriage Licences 1523-1632 Pub.1899

3.4 CHRISTOPHER TAPSON OF CALSTOCK, TANNER

Calstock is the Cornish parish closest to Buckland Monachorum; it is no more than three miles from Buckland Monachorum village to the river Tamar, which forms the eastern and northern boundaries of Calstock parish. On the west bank of the Tamar, ten miles or so up-river from the road and railway bridges linking Plymouth with Saltash in Cornwall (page 82), Calstock village today has the appearance of a tiny, but busy, port. The ancient houses lining the waterfront suggest that the village has changed little over the centuries, except that today much of its river-traffic is generated by tourists. Behind the village the ground rises steeply towards the parish church, rebuilt in the Fifteenth Century in the Perpendicular Style. An indenture (WDRO 36/62) provides us with information about Christopher Tapson.

Indenture dated 6 January 1626/7

This Indenture made the sixth daie of Januarie in the seconde yeare of the raigne of our sovraigne Lord Charles by the grace of God of Englande Scotlande France and Irelande Kinge defender of the Faithe etc. Betweene Margrett Tapson widowe late wife of Richarde Tapson of Bucklande Monachorum in the Countey of Devon deceased of thone partie and Christopher Tapson Nephewe and heire apparant of the said Margrett of thother partie. Witnesseth that the saide Margrett Tapson as well for and in consideracion of the naturall love and affection which shee beareth to the saide Christopher Tapson her Nephewe and for his better preferment and mayntenance as also for divers other good causes and consideracions her the said Margrett thereunto movinge. Doth by these presents Covenant Grante and agree to and with the said Christopher Tapson and his heires that the saide Margrett Tapson her heires and assignes and all and everye other person and persons nowe seized or hereafter to be seized of and in all that Tenement with Thappurtennances [the appurtenances] *called or knowen by the name of Willesworthie situate lyenge and beinge within the parishe of Peterstavie in the Countey of Devon aforesaid, and in one parcell of meadowe in Broadmeade in Warpesworthie in the parishe of Tavistocke in the saide Countie sometime the landes of Henrie Standon deceased late father of the said Margrett,* shall and will from hencefoorth stand and be thereof seized to the only use and uses hereafter mentioned and to no other use or purpose That is to saye, that the said margrett Tapson may have and enioye the same for and duringe her naturall life without impeachment of or for any maner of waste, with rightfull and lawfull power and authoritie to Demise sett or lett the same or any parte or parcell thereof for one Twoe, or three lives, either in possession or reversion and not otherwise and after her decease then to the onlie use and behoofe of the said Christopher Tapson his heires and assignes for evermore. In witnes whereof the parties to these presents interchangeablie their handes and seales have putt Even the daie and yeare firste above written 1626*

Since Margaret was already the widow of *Richarde Tapson of Bucklande Monachorum* by January 1626/7, her husband must have been the Richard buried on 27 April 1619 (page 6); *Margareta Tapson vidua* was buried on 22 February 1629/30 (page 7). In 1609-10 a Richard Tapson paid tax in Buckland Monachorum on goods worth £5, but in 1623-4 tax on goods valued at £3 was paid by *Margreta Tapson vid* (page 114). The word *nephew* comes from Latin *nepos* meaning *grandson*; until the end of the Seventeenth Century the word was often, and during the Seventeenth Century generally, used with this meaning, although it could sometimes be applied to any descendant or kinsman. The only baptism in Buckland Monachorum of a Christopher Tapson who could have been Margaret's grandson was that of the son of Christopher Tapson, on 13 May 1610 (page 5); this Chistopher Tapson, the father, had been baptized 30 years earlier on 24 December 1579 (page 4), the son of Richard Tapson — and therefore of Margaret, née Standon as we discover from the indenture. He married Katharine Foote on 26 January 1606/7 (page 2) and their family comprised (page 5):

Richaurd	baptized	24	Nov	1607
Christopher	baptized	13	May	1610
William	baptized	7	Oct	1612
Temperance	baptized	18	Jun	1615

*See Appendix VI (Addenda).

Christopher, the father, was buried at the early age of 37 on 15 May 1617 (page 6), leaving four children aged 9, 7, 4 and almost 2. Christopher, Margaret's eldest grandson and heir apparent, would have been 16 at the time of the indenture, which Margaret clearly thought necessary in order to ensure her own financial protection by legally restraining her grandson from prematurely seizing his inheritance before her death. Not many years after his grandmother's death Christopher sold his inheritance; the sale was probably by means of a feoffment (page 38) for, although the conveyancing deed has not survived, a quitclaim (WDRO 710/941) implies that livery of seizin had taken place. Since it is a good example of a quitclaim, the document is quoted in full:

Quitclaim dated 8 May 1637

To all peopell to whome these presents shall come Chrytopher Tapson of Caulstocke in the Countye of Cornwall Tanner sendeth greetinge in our lord god everlastinge knowe yee me the said Chrytopher Tapson For and in Consideracon of the some of three and fiftie poundes and tenne shillings of lawfull money of England to me in hand paid by William Foote of Walkhampton in the Countye of Devon yeoman Before the sealinge and deliverie of these presents have remised released and allwayes for me and my heires by these presents have quite Claymed unto the forenamed William Foote in his peaceable possession and seisin nowe beynge and to his heires forever All that my right tytle estate Clayme interest possession reversion and demaund whatsoever which I the said Chrytopher Tapson att anye tyme here to fore have had now have or hereafter by anye meanes shall or may have or which my heires or assignes or anye of us hereafter may have of and in All that Messuage or Tenement with thappurtencs Called or knowne by the name of Willesworthie lyeinge and beynge within the parish of Petertavie in the Countye of Devon and alsoe of and in all that Meadowe in Broadmeade in Warpesworthie in the parish of Tavystocke in the said Countye of Devon Soe that neither I the said Chrystopher Tapson nor my heires and assignes nor any of us nor any other person or persons for us or in our names shall or may att anye tyme hereafter Clayme or Challenge anye right tytle estate interest or demaund of in or to the premisses aforesaid or of in or to anye parte parcell thereof But of and from all and all manner of Rights tytles estates Claymes interests accons demandes thereunto wee and everye of us shall be fullie and wholie barred and excluded for ever by these presents and I trulie the foresaid Chrytopher Tapson and my heires all and singular the premisses before by these presents remised and released and every parte and parcell of the same unto the forenamed William Foote his heires and assignes forever and against all person and persons shall and will warrant acquite and by these presents defend
In witnes whereof I the said Chrytopher Tapson have hereunto put my hand and seale even the Eigth day of May in the thirteenth yeare of the Rayne of our Soveraigne Lord Charles by the grace of God of England Scotland France and Ireland Kinge defender of the Faith etc. Anno domini 1637

Another document of the same date (WDRO 36/90) is endorsed *Tapson to Foote Bond for performance of covenants*; this binds Christopher in the sum of £100 to fulfil the covenants contained in a pair of indentures (which have not survived) also stated to be of the same date. In both the quitclaim and the bond Christopher made his mark: ✂ . [A *messuage* is a dwelling house with the land around it and any outhouses; a *tenement* is a holding of land and buildings.]

The only Christopher Tapson to sign the Protestation Oath in 1642 (page 19) was in St. Germans Parish, which is about ten miles south of Calstock. Christopher was living in Calstock five years earlier when he sold his inheritance, so it may well be that he was in St. Germans on business in 1642. He certainly returned to Calstock, for the register of that parish has the entry:

Christopher Tapson was buried the 17th day of January 1660

This is the sole reference to Christopher in the register, which has survived only from 1656, or in the small number of bishop's transcripts which have survived from before that date; so we do not know whether he had children baptized in that parish. The next Tapson entry in the Calstock parish register is another burial:

Thomas Tapson was buried the fowerth day of September 1664

However, it is not clear to whom this refers.

3.5 WILLIAM TAPSON OF BUCKLAND MONACHORUM, CORDWYNER

Christopher's sister Temperance would have been just 18 years old at the time of the marriage, some 15 miles from Buckland Monachorum, at Liskeard in Cornwall:

26 Sep 1637 John Cardue & Temperance Tapson

However, Christopher's brother, William, seems to have remained in Buckland Monachorum. He would have been 22 when a William Tapson married Elizabeth Walter on 27 July 1635 (page 2). Exactly a year later Elizabeth, daughter of William Tapson, was baptized, on 27 July 1636 (page 5). William's wife was buried a week later, on 2 August 1636, and his daughter on 8 February 1636/7 (page 7).

It would seem to be this same William (for no other William had been baptized in Buckland Monachorum since William Tapson of Stonehouse in 1588) who married Elizabeth Lavers on 14 January 1636/7 (page 2); he was no doubt desperate to have someone to care for his ailing infant daughter who was to die just a few weeks later. William had six children by this second marriage (page 5):

William	baptized	8	Mar	1637/8
Joan	baptized	25	Oct	1640
Thomas	baptized	31	Jul	1642
Elizabeth	baptized		May	1645
Joan	baptized	19	Dec	1646
Christopher	baptized	27	Mar	1653

William's first daughter named Joan was buried on 5 August 1641, the second on 17 August 1647; and Christopher was buried on 6 December 1655 (page 7). A week after the burial of William's youngest son his second wife was buried, on 12 December 1655.

William married for the third time on 2 September 1657 (page 2). Richaurd, his third wife, died on 9 December 1675 and William himself on 5 July 1680 (page 7); he would have been 67 years old. His burial entry states that William was a *cordwyner* (a cordwainer — a worker or trader in leather goods — from *Cordovan*, a resident of the Spanish town of Cordoba famous for its fine leather known as cordwain and used in mediæval Europe for the boots of the wealthy). This is of interest in view of the fact that his brother, Christopher of Calstock, was a tanner.•

It may seem strange, if the younger Christopher was the nephew (in the modern sense of the word) of William Tapson of Stonehouse and his brothers John and Thomas, who were obviously intelligent and well-educated men of the world, that he should be unable to write, or even to sign his name. However, when his father died Christopher, then aged 7 years, was probably sent out at the earliest opportunity to earn his own keep and perhaps to provide some support for his younger brother and sister. There would have been little opportunity for education; as soon as they were old enough both he and William would have had to learn a trade, each of them ending up in the leather industry.

As already observed (page 35) there may have been two Richard Tapsons raising families in Buckland Monachorum towards the end of the Sixteenth Century, one being the father of Christopher the elder, another being the father of William of Stonehouse and of his brothers and sisters, although (for the reasons already given) it seems more likely that there was only one. On this assumption, a branch of the Tapson family tree for the (probable) descendants of Richard and Margaret is now given, but on account of the doubt just expressed it must carry the usual health warning.

The Richard (or one of them) standing at the head of this branch of the Tapson family must have been the *Richardus Tapsham*, tithingman, named in the Buckland Monachorum manor court roll of 27 November 1602 (page 12), and perhaps also the *Richard Tapsen* who paid tax on goods valued at £4 in 1581 (page 15). More information about Richard's activities will emerge later (page 120).

•It was probably this William who signed the Protestation Oath at Buckland Monachorum in 1642 (page 19). His will was proved at the Principal Registry of the Bishop of Exeter (page 21). See also Appendix VI (Addenda).

Bickham lies about two miles south of Buckland Monachorum village, near the quaint hamlet of Milton Combe. The Buckland Monachorum parish register records the baptisms of Agnes and her brother and sister:

22 Oct 1574 Johannes Palmer filius Johannis
15 Aug 1576 Susanna Palmer filia Johannis
7 Nov 1578 Agnes Palmer filia Johannis

So Agnes would have been 18 years old when she married Thomas Tapson.

Agnes's daughter, Julian, would have been 19 when she was married at Staverton:

25 Oct 1619 Jeffery Bulley & Julyan Tapson

and her son, Thomas, would have been 22 at the time of his marriage, also at Staverton:

2 Dec 1620 Thomas Tapsam & Johan Bulley.

Staverton is near Totnes. It seems likely that Jeffery Bulley and Joan Bulley were brother and sister. The earliest Tapson will to be proved in the Connotorial Archidiaconal Court of Cornwall (CRO AP/T/959/1), that of Agnes Tapson of St. Stephens by Saltash (page 21), names her daughter Julian Bulley and grandchildren Elizabeth Bulley, Thomas Bulley and Julian (married to Hugh Pope), so this Agnes must have been the widow of Thomas Tapson of Buckland Monachorum.

The Will of Agnes Tapson dated 12 January 1662/3

In the name of God Amen. I Agnies Tapson of Little Ashe in the parish of Stephens in the County of Cornwall widdowe. beeing sick and weake in body but in sound and perfect mind and memory praised bee Almighty God. doe make and ordaine this my last will and Testament (revoaking and making voyd all former and other will or wills whatsoever) in manner and forme folowing Imprimis I give and beequeath my soul to God my maker and to Jesus Christ my Redemer trusting in him to have everlasting life and my body to bee buried in decent maner And as for that Temperall Estate wich God hath bin pleased to beestow on mee I give and bequeath the same in manner folowing Imprimis I give and beequeath unto the poore of the parish of Budeox thirty shillings Lawfull English money. Item I give and beequeath unto Hugh Pope of Manaton in Devon Yeoman Husband to Julian my Grandchild the sum of Forty pounds Lawfull English money Item I give and beequeath to Elizabeth Bulley my Grandchild the sum of Tenn pounds Item I give and bequeath to Thomas Bulley my Grandchild the sum of Forty shillings Item I give and bequeath to Richard Williams of St Budeox Blacksmith his Five Children Twenty shillings apeece Item I give to Margaritt Rayne widowe Twenty shillings: Item I give unto Marke Hornabrooke and his Daughter Millia Tenn shillings apeece., Item I give unto Benedict Relps Children the sum of Fower pounds between them — All which Legacyes and bequests I will they bee paid by my Executrix heerafter named within six months after my decease to the Respective persons as the same is given and bequeathed All the rest of my Goods and Chattells not heerin given or bequeathed I give and bequeath the same unto Jullian Bulley widow my daughter whome I make and ordaine to bee my whole and sole Executrix of this my last will and Testament In wittnes wherof I have hearunto sett my hand and seale the Twelvth day of January in the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred sixty and two — I give unto John Williams of plymouth Stationer the sum of Twenty shillings within six months after my decease to be soe paid

The signe of the said Agnies Tapson

Agnes was 86 years old when she was buried at St. Budeaux:

14 Jun 1665 Agnis Tapson

Her will was proved on 27 August 1666 and an inventory was made of her goods (CRO AP/T/959/3):

A perfect Inventory of the goods of Agnis Tapson late of St Budeox in the County of Cornwall widowe deceased valued and prised by John Harding and Thomas Rickard this twelveth day of June in the yeare of our Lord 1666

Impr^{s}	*In bonds and bills in good and bad debts the summe of*	*152 - 7 - 6*
	one feather bed togeather with all the bed cloathes to the same belonging	*01 - 10 - 0*
	Her Apparell	*00 - 10 - 0*
	fower little pans a little Corke a cauldron and one pewter dish	*02 - 0 - 0*

3.8 THOMAS TAPSON OF ST BUDEAUX, YEOMAN

It seems that, perhaps after the termination of her lease at Bickham and Culver Parke, Agnes had moved from Buckland Monachorum to settle in St. Budeaux (about 7 miles away and now part of the city of Plymouth), although she was in St. Stephens by Saltash when she made her will. St. Stephens is on the Cornish side of the Tamar estuary directly opposite the Devonshire parish of St. Budeaux. There was a ferry between them from a very early period, possibly even in Roman times; the ferry continued in use, as a car ferry, until the opening of the Saltash Road Bridge in 1961. The Royal Albert Railway Bridge, designed by I. K. Brunel, was opened over a century earlier, in 1859, by the Prince Consort; its total length is 2,440 feet.

Agnes's son Thomas and his wife Joan (page 81) were already living at St. Budeaux when their children were born; the baptisms are recorded in the register of that parish:

8 Feb 1623 Agnes dau of Thomas Tapsham & Joan his wife
5 Feb 1631 Thomas son of Thomas Tapson & Joane his wife

An undated rental survey (PRO SC12/2/37) for Trematon Manor, an ancient Duchy of Cornwall manor in St. Stephens by Saltash, lists among the customary tenants *Thomas Tapson* and *Giffrye Bulley*, the latter presumably being the husband, Jeffery, of Thomas's sister, Julian; so Agnes had obviously left Buckland Monachorum to join both her children. It is not clear whether Thomas held land in Cornwall belonging to the manor of Trematon or whether the manor land he held was in St. Budeaux. Thomas's will is the second of the only two P.C.C. wills of Seventeenth-Century Tapsons (page 22); it gives his address as *Passage*:

The Will of Thomas Tapson dated 30 March 1654

In the Name of God Amen I Thomas Tapson of Passage in the Parish of Saint Bydiox Yeoman being weake of bodie but sounde and perfect in minde and memorie doe make this my last Will and Testament in manner and forme following First I give and bequeath my Soule unto Almightie God from whome it came hopeing through the merritts of Jesus Christ my Saviour to inheritt everlasting salvation and my bodie to Christian buriall Also I give and bequeath unto the poore of the Parish of Saint Budiox the summe of tenne shillings Also I give and bequeath unto Marke Hornabrooke my servante one suite of Cloathes All the rest of my goods and Chattles my debts being trulie and duelie paide and satisfyed I doe hereby give and bequeath unto Johane my wife and Thomas my sonne whome I make and ordaine to be my full and whole Executors of this my last Will and Testament and doe hereby intreate and appoynte my loveing freindes Henery Ewstes of Saint Budiox and Thomas Boohay of Saltash Yeoman to be overseers of this my will and Testament to see the same duelie and trulie performed In witnesse whereof I have hereunto sett my hande and seale the Thirtith Day of March in the yeare of our Lord Christ One Thousand six hundred fiftie and fower in the presence of those whose names are hereunto subscribed The signe of Thomas Tapson

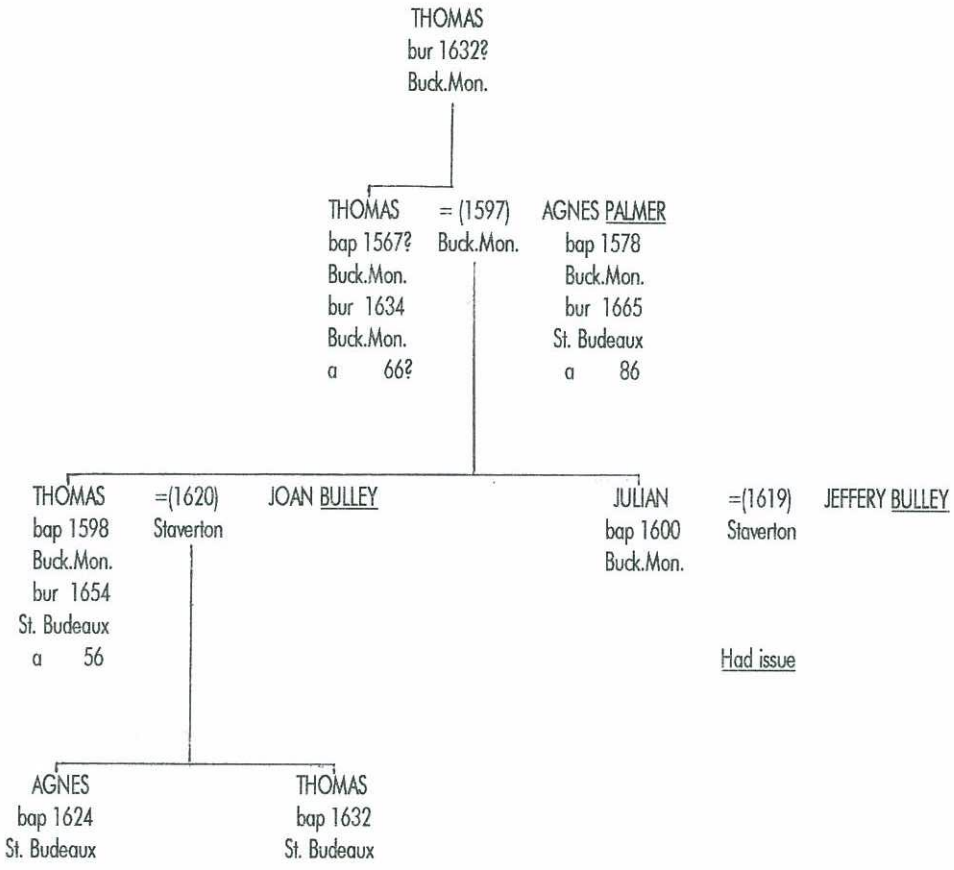
Thomas was 56 when he was buried at St. Budeaux:

30 Jun 1654 Thomas Tapson of passage

Thomas's will was proved on 6 March 1654/5 at London in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury (PRO PROB11/247 Fo. 409). The grant of probate was written in English: a changeover from Latin to English for legal documents occurred from 1651 to 1660, during the Commonwealth. Neither Thomas nor his mother could write their names. Thomas left a suit of clothes to his servant Marke Hornabrooke, who also received a legacy from Agnes when she died, eleven years after her son.

Because of the considerable amount of corroborative evidence we can be reasonably confident about the accuracy of this little branch — or twiglet — of the Tapson family tree. However, the date of birth of Agnes's husband, Thomas, is not certain, though the only Tapson baptized in Buckland Monachorum who could fill this rôle was the Thomas baptized on 13 September 1567; unfortunately the name of his father (probably Thomas) was omitted from the baptismal entry. If this is so, he would have been 29 when he married — 11 years older than Agnes — and 66 when he died.

The Tapsons of St. Budeaux



3.9 ROBERT TAPSON OF CALSTOCK

A marriage is recorded in the register of St. Dominic, the next parish to the south of Calstock parish:

24 Nov 1666 Robert Tapson & Joan Dymond

Two days later there was another wedding ceremony, this time at Calstock:

26 Nov 1666 Robert Tapson & Joan Dimond

The Calstock register records no other events — baptisms or funerals — relating to Robert's sojourn in the parish. The only further evidence we have of him is that he paid Hearth Tax in Calstock in 1664 (page 20) on two hearths, and that he made a will at Calstock which has survived. Links with the parish of Buckland Monachorum are again provided by this will (CRO AP/T/1398/1), the second of the two Tapson wills to be proved in the Connotorial Archidiaconal Court of Cornwall (page 21). The parchment has sustained some damage.

The Will of Robert Tapson dated 1 February 1680/1

In the name of God Amen I Robert Tapson of the parrish of Calstocke in the County of Cornwall beinge weake of Boddy but of perfiff Memory God to bee praysed for it doe make and ordaine this my Last Will and Testament in Manner and Forme First I bequeath my Soule to Almightie God my maker and to Jesus Christ my Redeemerer in hope [of a] *joyfull Resur*[rection until that] *day when both Soule and Boddy shall be reunited and* [ ] *of Everlastinge Happiness and my Boddy to the Earth*

I Give to the poore of the parishe of Calstocke Five shillings to bee disposed of by my Executrix heerafter named. Item I give and bequeath to Robert Tapson the Sonne of John Tapson of Buckland monachorum Lately deceased twenty shillings Item I Give and bequeath to my Sister in Law Joane Quicke the summe of Seven pounds if she bee Livinge after my decease otherwise to remayne to my Executrix heerafter named Item I Give to Mary Hill the daughter of Marke Hill my God daughter two shillings six pence Item I Give to Mary the daughter of William Stentaford two shillings six pence Item I Give and bequeath to Grace the daughter of Robertt Ellacott two shillings six pence: All the rest of my Goods and Chattles not Given nor bequeathed I Give and bequeath to Joane Tapson my beloved wife and her I make my whole Executrix to see my debts payed and my Legacies dischardged accordinge to the true Intent and Meaninge heerof: In witnes whereof I have heereunto put my hand and seale the first day of February in the yeare of our Lord God one Thousand Six Hundred and Eaighty *Robert Tapsonne*

The will was witnessed by John Hill Senior, Thomas Diamond (who made his mark) and John Hill Junior; it was proved on 18 June 1688. *John Tapson of Buckland monachorum Lately deceased* must have been the John buried at Buckland Monachorum on 5 May 1680 (page 7), nine months before the will was drawn up, the husband of Elizabeth whose youngest son, Robert, would have been five years old at the date of the will (page 5). See also page 122.

An inventory was made of Robert's goods (CRO AP/T/1398/2):

An Inventory of All the Goods and Chattels of Robert Tapson late Deceased of the parish of Calstocke Valeued and Appraysed the 7 Day of Aprill 1688 By Ezekiell Diamond and John Hill as heereafter Followeth

	li	*s*	*d*
Imprimis his Purse and girdle and Wearing Apparrell	*02*	*00*	*00*
Item One Cowe and one heffer	*03*	*10*	*08*
Item ewes and Lambs and other sheepe	*03*	*06*	*00*
Item one Littell Pigg	*00*	*05*	*00*
Item his Crock Brass	*00*	*13*	*04*
Item two Littell Brass Kittells	*00*	*10*	*00*
Item two Dust beeds with there furnature	*01*	*13*	*04*
Item eigt smale puter Dishes	*00*	*08*	*00*
Item his Sider	*02*	*00*	*00*
Item his Timber worke and Timber tressells	*02*	*03*	*00*
Item his Corne in the ground and in the Mowhey	*03*	*00*	*00*
Item his pultery	*00*	*01*	*06*
Item desperitt Debts and otherwayes	*20*	*00*	*00*
Item things unknowne and not here praysed	*00*	*03*	*04*
Summe	*39*	*14*	*02*

The inventory was signed by *Ezek: Diamond* and *John: Hill*. Thomas Diamond, who witnessed the will, and Ezekiell were probably relatives of Robert's wife, Joan, née Diamond. The items listed in the inventory strongly suggest that Robert was a yeoman.

There seems to be no burial entry in the Calstock register for Robert, but the following entry probably records the burial of his widow, Joan:

11 Dec 1695 Joane Topson widdow

3.10 ROBERT TAPSON OF BRATTON CLOVELLY

As was mentioned earlier (page 75), at about the same time that Thomas Tapson married Anne Incledon, another Tapson, Robert, appeared in Bratton Clovelly. The parish register entries which refer to Robert's branch of the Tapson family are now listed:

Baptisms

18	*Oct*	*1632(3?)*	*John*	*son of Robert Tapson*
21	*Sep*	*1634*	*Joan*	*dau of Robert Tapson*
14	*Sep*	*1640*	*Eliz*	*dau of Robert Tapson & Eliz*
3	*Mar*	*1647*	*Robert Topson*	*son of Robert Tapsen*
3	*Nov*	*1657*	*Elizabeth*	*dau of John Tapson & Elizabeth*
16	*Nov*	*1658*	*John*	*son of John Tapson & Elizabeth*
3	*Sep*	*1661*	*Margaret*	*dau of John Tapson & Elizabeth*
2	*Jun*	*1663*	*Robert*	*son of John Tapson & Elizabeth*
13	*Mar*	*1665*	*William*	*son of John Tapson & Elizabeth*

Marriages

6	*Jan*	*1656*	*John Tapson & Elizabeth Hill*
25	*Nov*	*1703*	*Sidrach Stephens of Ashwater & Margaret the dau of John Tapson*

Burials

27	*Jun*	*1662*	*Margaret*	*dau of John Tapson*
18	*Mar*	*1675*	*Phillipa*	*dau of John Tapson*
10	*Jul*	*1689*	*Elizabeth*	*dau of John Tapson iunior & Mary his wife*
5	*Oct*	*1695*	*Sarah*	*the wife of Robert Tapson*
16	*Jan*	*1699*	*William Tapson*	
20	*Nov*	*1712*	*Joan Tapson*	
22	*Apr*	*1715*	*Robert Tapson*	
31	*Jan*	*1715*	*Elizabeth Tapson widdow*	

The baptisms of his four children provide the only evidence we have of Robert Tapson who settled in Bratton Clovelly in the first half of the Seventeenth Century, except that he signed the Protestation Oath in 1642 (page 19). One can only speculate as to where he came from; however, though it may be no more than a coincidence, a marriage allegation* dated 18 Jan 1631/2:

Robert Tapson of Buckland Monachorum & Elizabeth Langsford of Samford Spiney

probably refers to this Robert, whose first child was baptized just nine months later, on 18 October. [The difficulties of reading the Bratton Clovelly parish register of this period have already been noted (page 75): although this first baptism seems to have taken place on 18 October 1632, it is just possible that the date should be read as 1633; but this would leave only eleven months before the next baptism.] Sampford Spiney, the bride's home, is one of the parishes adjoining Buckland Monachorum; Bratton Clovelly is some 15 miles north of Buckland Monachorum village.

Neither Robert nor his wife, Elizabeth, seem to have been buried at Bratton Clovelly, and nothing more is heard in that parish of their son Robert. [The Robert who was buried in 1715 was almost certainly John's son, who is known to have been living in Bratton Clovelly in 1702 (page 87).] Likewise, there is no further mention in the parish register of Robert's daughter Elizabeth, who quite possibly married and moved to another parish; however, the Joan buried in 1712 may have been his elder daughter (but see page 88, where this branch of the family tree will also be found). Although we know little of Robert Tapson (but see page 90), it is clear that the family were not without means for, as will be shown in the next section, his son John, who was a yeoman, was able to purchase a considerable amount of land. It seems likely therefore that Robert too was a yeoman.

*J.H. MANN: Exeter Marriage Licences 1631-1762

3.11 JOHN TAPSON OF BRATTON CLOVELLY, YEOMAN

The marriage of Robert's son John to Elizabeth Hill is entered in the Bratton Clovelly register; as well as their five children whose baptisms are recorded, John and Elizabeth must have had another daughter, Phillipa (whose burial entry appears in the register), and a second daughter named Margaret (the first Margaret having died in infancy), who was to marry Sidrach Stephens in 1703. It will be shown later (page87) that John purchased a tenement known as East Cliffe in Sourton, the adjoining parish to the east of Bratton Clovelly; and an indenture survives which relates to his purchase of further tenements in Sourton: a moiety of West Cleave, a moiety of Blatchford, a quarter of Black Rixton, a quarter of Woodyeats and a quarter of Atthorne. This document (DRO DD30291) is a lease for one year; it was presumably followed the next day by a release which has not survived but which would have transferred ownership of the properties to John Tapson by the device of Lease and Release (page 39). All these properties had tenants on long-term leases; John was buying the proprietorship, which would bring him rent income.

Purchase of Tenements in Sourton dated 9 February 1672/3 (Abstract)

LEASE Indenture dated 9 February, 25 Charles II, between

1. John Courtenay of Molland, Devon, Esq.
   Thomas Melhuish of Watetowne in Northam, Devon, Esq.

Trustees appointed in and by the last Will and Testament of John Moore late of Upcot within the parish of Cheriton-Fitz-paine .... Devon Esq deceased for the raisinge of moneis for the payment of the debts and for the Levyinge of certaine porcons and summes of money for the younger children of the saide John Moore

2. John Tapson of Bratton Clovelly, Devon, Yeoman

Witnesses that John Courtenay and Thomas Melhuish for the sum of five shillings *Doe graunte bargaine and Sell unto .... John Tapson all the porcons of the Messuages Lands and Tenements late the Inheritance of the saide John Moore .... That is to say the Moyetie .... of one Tenement called .... West Cleeve The Moyetie .... of One other Messuage and Tenement commonly called .... Blachford The Fowerth parte of One other Messuage and Tenement commonly called .... Black-Rixton, The Fowerth parte of One other Messuage and Tenement commonly called .... Wood-Yeats and the Fowerth parte of One other Messuage and Tenement commonly called .... Atthorne All and singuler which said Messuages Lands and Tenements are parte of the Mannor of Sourton lyinge within the parish of Sourton and County of Devon now in the several tenures and occupacon of John Randle, Walter Hunn, Richard Tickle, Stephen Harris and Robert Lillecrapp.* Premises to be held for one year at a rent of *One graine of wheate*

Endorsed *The Lease for one yeare of Lands in Sourton Dat 9 Feb 25 Car 2nd*

The year after his purchase of these properties, in 1674, John paid tax on three hearths (page 20). Another document (DRO DD30067) seems to be the affirmation, ten years later, by means of a Fine recorded in the Court of Common Pleas at Westminster (page 38) of the sale of these and other properties to John Tapson and others.

In 1689 Elizabeth, the daughter of John's eldest son, John, and of his wife Mary, was buried; the Bratton Clovelly register contains no further reference to this John and Mary. However, an undated bishop's transcript does record the burial of a Mary Tapson, although it is thought to be of a date too early to be the burial of John's wife.• John's second son, Robert, was married by licence* dated 1694:

Robert Tapson of Bratton Clovelly and Sara Prowse of South Brent

Sarah died soon afterwards, presumably during childbirth. And John's youngest son, William, would have been nearly 34 when he died in January 1699/1700. It was at this time that the family must have been coming under financial pressure, for on 2 February 1699/1700 John and his son Robert had to take out a loan for £200 (page 87); John would have been 67 at the time and it would seem that Robert was taking over the management of their affairs.

*J.H. MANN: Exeter Marriage Licences 1631-1762

•See Appendix VI (Addenda).

Two years later, unable to repay the loan, John and his son Robert were forced to sell their properties in Sourton; associated with them in the sale was Margaret, not yet married, but it is significant that there is no mention in the documentation of John Tapson Junior who must already have died or have moved away from Bratton Clovelly. The conveyance was by Lease and Release (DRO DD3O268, DD30269).

Sale of Tenements in Sourton dated 25 and 26 January 1701/2 (Abstract)

LEASE Indenture dated 25 January, 13 William III, between

1. Robert Tapson of Bratton Clovelly, Yeoman
   John Tapson of Bratton Clovelly, Yeoman, father of the said Robert Tapson
   Margaret Tapson, Spinster, daughter of the said John Tapson
   Robert Thompson of Eggbuckland, Gent
2. Nathaniell Ryder of Lyons Inn, Middlesex, Gent
   James Ryder of Lyons Inn, Gent

Witnesses that Robert, John and Margaret Tapson and Robert Thompson, for five shillings paid to them by Nathaniell and James Ryder have *bargained and sold* to the Ryders, for one year, East Cliffe in Sourton *which the said John Tapson heretofore purchased of John Prowse of Columpton .... esquire John Hutchins of Moncton .... Yeoman and Elizabeth his wife .... and now in the tenure or possession of Walter Gill Yeoman*; and also parts of tenements *being heretofore the inheritance of John Moore late of Upcot in the said County of Devon*, that is, half a tenement called West Cleave and Sanctuary Meadow, half a messuage and tenement called Blatchford, one quarter of a messuage and tenement called Black Rixton, a quarter of a messuage and tenement called Woodyates, and a quarter of a messuage and tenement called Atthorne, all lately parcel of the manor of Sourton .... and now *in the several respective tenures or possessions of Henry Rendle, James Pengelly, John Tickle, Stephen Harris and Robert Blatchford.*

RELEASE Indenture dated 26 January, 13 William III, between

1. Robert Tapson of Bratton Clovelly, Yeoman
   John Tapson of Bratton Clovelly, Yeoman, father of the said Robert Tapson
   Margaret Tapson, Spinster, daughter of the said John Tapson
2. Robert Thompson of Eggbuckland, Gent
3. John Woolcombe of Pitton, Esq.
4. Nathaniell Ryder of Lyons Inn, Middlesex, Gent
   James Ryder of Lyons Inn, Gent

Recites that Robert and John Tapson, or one of them, about 2 February 1699, did borrow of Thompson £200 at 5 per cent for a term of three years, and as security conveyed to Thompson the properties listed in the Lease. Robert Tapson had paid £10 interest for the first year, but nothing since. Recites that Robert Tapson, John Tapson and Margaret Tapson have agreed with John Woolcombe for his purchase of the inheritance of the premises for £260, of which £210 is to be paid to Robert Thompson to pay off the mortgage and the remainder to Robert or John Tapson; and that a recovery is to be suffered with the Ryders as tenants to secure the title to Woolcombe.
Witnesses that for this purpose the Tapsons convey to the Ryders the tenements listed in the Lease.

The Lease and Release was followed, a month later, by another document securing the sale (DRO DD30276), which was to be recorded in the Court of Common Pleas at Westminster.

Affirmation of Sale of Tenements in Sourton dated 26 February 1701/2 (Abstract)

Indenture dated 26 February, 14 William III, between

1. Robert Tapson of Bratton Clovelly, Yeoman
   John Tapson of Bratton Clovelly, Yeoman, father of Robert Tapson
2. John Woolcombe of Pitton, Devon, Esq.

Witnesses that Robert and John Tapson *for the consideration of the summe of two hundred and threescore pounds* grant to John Woolcombe the above-mentioned tenements.

Annexed to this indenture is a schedule listing the leases previously granted on the premises being conveyed; and the indenture is endorsed

> *Wee the within named Robert Tapson and John Tapson Doe hereby acknowledge and declare that .... John Woolcombe Esquire hath on or before the day of the date hereof well and truly paid unto us .... threescore pounds .... being part of the consideracon or purchase money for the Inheritance and fee simple estate of the Messuages Lands Tenements .... within mentioned to be granted .... And also that .... John Woolcombe hath well and truly paid at our desire and request .... unto Mary Thompson the wife of Robert Thompson of Plymouth Gentleman now Commander of her Majesties Shipp the Nonesuch the within menconed summe of two hundred pounds .... being the remainder of the purchase money of or for the premisses .... And that the said John Woolcombe hath also paid four pounds three shillings for the Interest for the said two hundred pounds She the said Mary Thompson being legally authorised by a Letter of Attorny being dated the First day of December now last past under the hand and seale of the said Robert Thompson .... being written upon paper Stamped for two severall duties of six pence to demand require and receive the same and upon receipt to give a sufficient discharge .... for the same Witnese our hands the Ninth day of July 1702*
>
> *Robert Tapson John Tapson*

Also on 9 July 1702 the release of 26 January 1701/2 was endorsed by *Mary Thompson the wife and lawfull attorny of Robert Thompson late of Eggbuckland and since of Plymouth in the County of Devon Gentleman now Commander of her Majesties Shipp The Nonesuch* for receipt of £200 and interest due.

There appears to be no burial entry for John Tapson Senior in the carelessly-kept parish register of Bratton Clovelly (unless the 1712 burial entry should be read *as John* rather than *Joan*), but he was clearly dead by 1715 when the assessment for contributions to the Devon Militia (DRO Z1/43/4/3) has the entry:

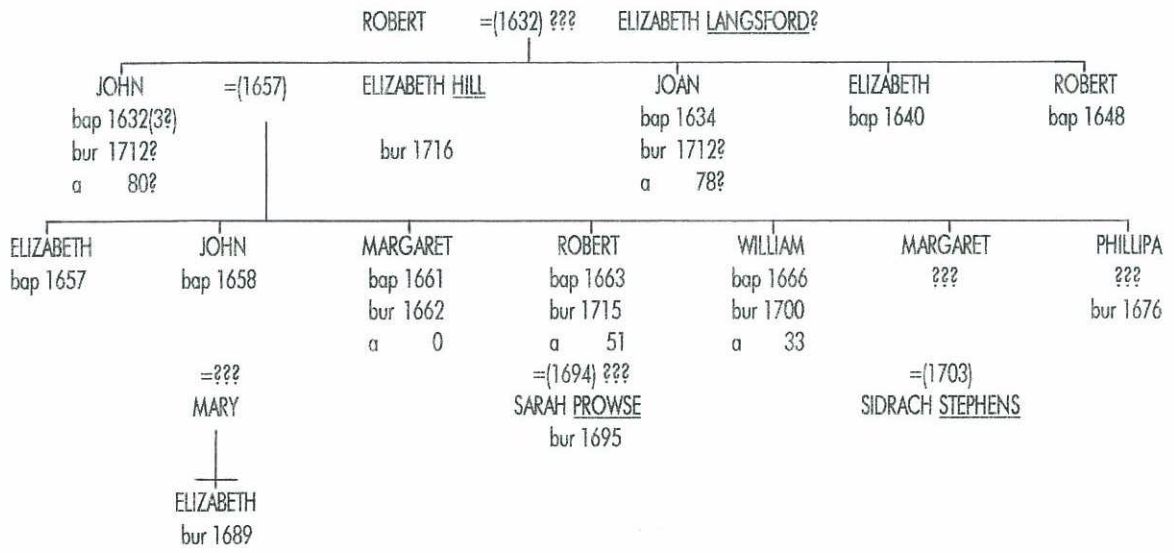
Elyzabeth Tapsson for Borough *£4 - 10 - 0*

£4 - 10 - 0 being the assessed annual value of the property. Also included in this assessment is:

Shadrach Stephens *£25 - 10 - 0*

presumably Margaret's husband whom she had married in 1703. That Elizabeth paid this tax is confirmation that it was her son Robert who was buried on 22 April 1715; he would have been nearly 52 years old.* Elizabeth was buried soon afterwards, on 31 January 1715/6.

Descendants of Robert Tapson of Bratton Clovelly



Except where indicated by ???, all baptisms, marriages and burials took place at Bratton Clovelly.

*Robert's will was proved at the Principal Registry of the Bishop of Exeter (page 21).

3.12 ROBERT TAPSON OF BERE FERRERS

The poor state of preservation of the early Bere Ferrers parish registers and bishop's transcripts has already been noted (page 11); the only discernible Tapson entries earlier that 1750 are as follows:

Baptisms

19 Aug 1696	*Nicholas*	*son of Robert Tapson & Frances*
20 May 1700	*Ann*	*dau of Robert Tapson & Frances*
31 Jul 1709	*Joan*	*dau of Robert Tapson & Frances*

Marriages

7 Jan 1726	*Thomas Wills & Ann Tapson*
1732	*Philip Smith & Joan Tapson*

Burials

20 Nov 1712	*Joan*	*wife of Robert Tapson*
27 Jan 1722	*Rob^{t} Tapson*	

The burial entry of 20 November 1712 appears in the bishop's transcripts but not in the parish register; it seems likely that the parson entered the name of Robert's daughter in error for *Frances*, the name of Robert's wife.

Although the parish of Bere Ferrers adjoins that of Buckland Monachorum, it would appear that Robert and Frances were the only Tapsons to settle there, their daughters Ann and Joan being married at the ages of 26 and about 23 respectively. It is very likely that Robert was a yeoman, for the 1715 assessment for contributions to the Devon Militia (DRO Z1/43/5/1) has the entry:

Robert Tapson per his Estates *£9*

£9 being the assessed annual value of his property.

3.13 TAPSONS IN SAMPFORD SPINEY

Whilst there is little evidence of movement of Tapsons into Bere Ferrers or into Whitchurch (page 11), the family seem to have had more association with Sampford Spiney, another parish adjoining Buckland Monachorum. The village of Sampford Spiney is four miles north-east of Buckland Monachorum village; the river Walkham flows through the parish of Sampford Spiney, and meets the Tavy in Buckland Monachorum parish at Double Waters (page 111). The earliest known reference to a Tapson in connection with Sampford Spiney is that of *William Tapsam* listed in the lay subsidy assessment of 1543-5 (page 15).

The next piece of evidence about the Tapsons in Sampford Spiney is the name of *Elias Tapson* of *Sampford Spiney Parish* who signed the Protestation Oath in 1642 (page 19). This unusual name, for the Tapson family, leads one to suspect that he might have been the *Elizeus filius Johannis Tapson* baptized at Buckland Monachorum on 27 June 1590 (page 4), who was perhaps also the *Elizeus Tapson* who married Edna Cole at Buckland Monachorum on 22 April 1628 (page 2), and even the *Ellize Tapson* buried at Buckland Monachorum on 8 September 1658 (page 7). If these references are all to the same person, he would have married at the age of 37 and died at 68. There were no baptisms of children of Elias and Edna at Buckland Monachorum following their marriage there, a fact which lends credence to the suggestion that they moved away; but that he was the same Elias who signed the Protestation Oath at Sampford Spiney, though probable, cannot be certain.

Parish registers for Sampford Spiney exist, in parts, from 1654, but the earlier registers are very incomplete; specifically they survive for

Marriages:	11 Aug 1654 -	1752	
Baptisms:	3 Oct 1654 -	27 Mar 1660,	3 Mar 1704/5 →
Burials:	13 Feb 1713/4 -	19 Nov 1737,	1742 →

There are also some bishop's transcripts for the Seventeenth Century, but these too are very incomplete and not easily legible; there are none between 1695 and 1749, but after that they are complete. The following are the only surviving legible, or almost legible, entries relating to the Tapson family in the Sampford Spiney parish registers or bishop's transcripts up to 1750; the first three burial entries are taken from the bishop's transcripts, in which the first letter of *Tapson* in the 1664 entry seems to be a strangely written *T*, and the 1683 entries are very faint.

Marriages

25	*Nov*	*1662*	*Richard Donigonne & Elizabeth Tapson*
6	*Nov*	*1666*	*Robert Tapson & Jane Balyatch(?)*
16	*May*	*1704*	*John Diftford of Tavistock (A mercer) & Johan Tapson*

Baptisms

9	*Mar*	*1671(2?)*	*Joane*	*dau of Robert & Jeone Tapson*
28	*Dec*	*1674*	*Joane*	*dau of Robert & Joane Tapson*
20	*May*	*1680*	*Richard*	*son of Robert & Joane Tapson*

Burials

15	*Dec*	*1664*	*Robert Tapson(?)*
		1683	*Elizabeth Tapson(?)*
		1683	*Richarde Tapson*
13	*Jul*	*1721*	*Mr Robert Tapson*
17	*Jan*	*1729*	*Richard Tapson*

As already observed (page 85), the Robert and Elizabeth who raised their family in Bratton Clovelly were probably the Robert Tapson of Buckland Monachorum and Elizabeth Langsford of Sampford Spiney whose marriage allegation was dated 18 January 1631/2. However, there is no burial entry for them in that parish; it is just a possibility that they may subsequently have moved to Sampford Spiney, perhaps to farm land inherited by Elizabeth, and that the *Robert Tapson of Sampford Spiny* buried at Buckland Monachorum on 9 December 1664 (page 7) was this same Robert. If so, he may have been the *Robertus filius Johannis Tapson* baptized at Buckland Monachorum on 18 February 1604/5 (page 5), marrying close to his 27 th birthday and dying at the age of 59. It may even have been this same Robert for whom a memorial service (rather than a burial) was held at Sampford Spiney on 15 December 1664, just six days after the burial at Buckland Monachorum; and the Elizabeth buried at Sampford Spiney in 1683 could have been his widow.

Further indulgence in speculation might lead to the conclusion that the Elizabeth and the Robert married in 1662 and 1666 may have been the youngest children of Robert and Elizabeth of Bratton Clovelly who perhaps moved to Sampford Spiney with their parents, for nothing more is heard of them in Bratton Clovelly after their baptisms. If so, Elizabeth would have married at the age of 22 and Robert when only 18. The bishop's transcript for 1670 was signed by *Robert Tapson*, a Churchwarden, and that for 1680 by *Ro Tapson*. Although the relative scarcity of the Tapson name in the extant records for Sampford Spiney implies that only a small contingent of the family were living there, Robert's title *Mr* in the 1721 burial entry suggests some prosperity and social status; it seems likely that he was the Robert who married Joan in 1666, raised his family in Sampford Spiney, served as Churchwarden and perhaps was the Tapson (whose first name is lost) who paid tax on seven hearths in 1674 (page 20). If he was the Robert baptized at Bratton Clovelly on 3 March 1647/8, he would have been 73 years old when he died.

3.14 ROBERT TAPSON OF ILSINGTON, GENTLEMAN

It is probable that a marriage allegation* of 2 July 1705:

Robert Tapson of Samford Spiney & Eleanor Hall of Drewsteignton, widow

refers to another son, whose baptismal entry has not survived, of *Mr Robert Tapson* buried at Sampford Spiney in 1721 and his wife Joan (page 90). Whereas Sampford Spiney is situated on the south-west slopes of Dartmoor, Drewsteignton is almost diametrically opposite, on the north-east edge of the moor between Exeter and Okehampton. The Drewsteignton register records the marriage:

17 Jul 1705 Robert Tapson of Samford Spiny & Eleanor Hall of this Parish

In 1707 the *Christnings* register for Drewsteignton was signed by (and appears to have been written by) *R Tapson Churchwarden* (DRO MF 3, line 3). His signature is written thus:

There are, however, no entries for christenings of children of Robert and Eleanor between 1705 and 15 May 1713, the date of another marriage allegation:*

Robert Tapson of Drewsteignton, gent, & Elizabeth Battishill of Ilsington, spr

The implication is that the same Robert was about to remarry, but there is no burial entry between 1705 and 1713 for Eleanor Tapson in the Drewsteignton register; however, nor is there a burial entry for any Tapson between 1705 and 1765, by which time Robert and Eleanor would surely have been dead. That it was the same Robert who was to marry Elizabeth Battishill seems to be clinched by the signature in the Ilsington parish register of, among others, a Robert Tapson confirming the accuracy of a *Terrier of the Vicarage of Ilsington*, dated 1727 (DRO MF4, line 3). Apart from the similarity of the shapes of the letters in the two signatures, with the *s* slightly higher than the other letters and a tail on the *n*, the colon after Robert's initial is quite distinctive (though not unusual at that period):

This, Robert's final move, was to the eastern side of Dartmoor, the village of Ilsington being situated on high ground at the edge of the moor. The next parish to the west of Ilsington parish is the well-known Widdecombe-in-the-Moor, of Uncle-Tom-Cobleigh fame, which is set in a wide valley surrounded by tors and moor. In marrying Elizabeth Battishill Robert was making a clever move, for she was heiress to a considerable estate. The *Original Visitation of Devon 1620* (page 105) gives the pedigree of *Battishill of South Tawton, Drewsteignton and Spreyton*. [South Tawton and Spreyton are parishes immediately to the west and north of Drewsteignton.] The pedigree of this armigerous family, dating from before 1526, begins:

John Battishill of West Wyke in County Devon = *Joane daughter & heir of Walter Woode of Bridstowe*

It is not known whether there is any connection with the property known as Battishill in Bridestowe (page 104). West Wyke, a house in the Tudor style erected in 1656, is at South Zeal in the parish of South Tawton. The Battishill family later moved their seat to Ingsdon, in Ilsington parish, probably during the lifetime of Elizabeth's father, John Battishill.

The Ilsington register records the baptisms:

22 Jun 1714	*John*	*son of Mr Robert Tapson & Elizabeth*
11 Jun 1716	*Elizabeth*	*dau of Robert Tapson Gent & Elizabeth*
11 Jul 1717	*Robert*	*son of Robert Tapson Gent & Elizabeth (born 13 Jun)*
19 Aug 1718	*Battishill*	*son of Robert Tapson Gent & Elizabeth*

and the burials:

21 Jun 1716	*Elizabeth*	*dau of Robert Tapson Gent, an infant*
27 Apr 1719	*Battishill*	*son of Robert Tapson Gent*

*J.H. MANN: Exeter Marriage Licences 1631-1762

Robert's two surviving children, John and Robert, both went up to Oxford, John to read medicine and Robert to become a Clerk in Holy Orders. Although the following entries in the *Alumni Oxonienses* both refer to Robert as *armiger*, a search at the College of Arms has failed to produce evidence of a grant of arms having ever been made to him:

Tapson, John, son of Robert of Ilsington, Devon, arm.
Exeter College. Matriculated 30 March 1731, aged 17
Fellow 1733. B.A. 14 March 1736/7 M.A. 10 June 1737 B.Med. 1741
Died 27 January1746/7. See College Register

Tapson, Robert, son of Robert of Ilsington, Devon, arm.
Exeter College. Matriculated 3 April 1734, aged 17
B.A. 1737 M.A. 1742

The Ilsington register records the burials of John and Robert and of their parents:

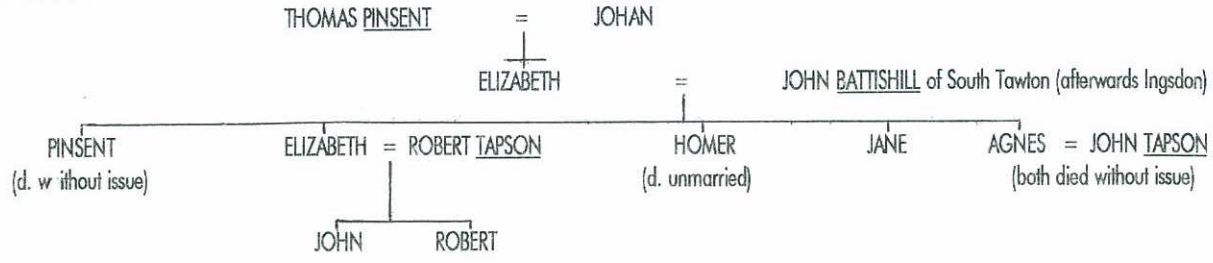
27 Apr 1741 Mrs Tapson
31 Jan 1746 John Tapson M.B.
1 Feb 1747 Robert Tapson of Ingsdon
11 Jul 1750 Robert Tapson A.M. Clerk

A copy was made of the will (DRO 1292M/Will75) of Robert Tapson, Clerk (page 21), which was proved on 23 October 1750 at the Principal Registry of the Bishop of Exeter:

The Will of Robert Tapson, Clerk, dated 12 November 1749

I Robert Tapson of Ingsdon in the County of Devon Clerk charge my estate (except my messuage in Dartmouth) with the payment of all my debts the debts of Robert Tapson Esq. deceased my late father and John Tapson Bachelor in Physick Deceased my late brother.
I bequeath unto Mrs Ancella Comins otherwise Chilcot who now lives with me at Ingsdon £400 plus £50 worth of my household goods and my messuage in Dartmouth. I bequeath unto George Fursdon Devon Esq. all that my Mannor or Lordship and Barton called South Zeal Devon and all my other Mannors, Lordships, Bartons, Farms and Messuages etc in the parishes of Ilsington, Highweek, South Tawton, Chagford, Bickington, Boveytracey, Bridistow, Halwill, Drewsteignton, Ashburton and Samford Spiney (subject to the payment of debts) I bequeath unto Revd Mr John Harris of Westegwell Devon Clerk £100 All the residue of my goods I bequeath unto George Fursdon whom I make the sole executor of my will.

Attached to the copy of the will is a pedigree of Elizabeth Battishill's mother, née Pinsent:



A series of documents (DRO 48/14/80/3-7) appertaining to the Battishill lands indicate that they had passed to Elizabeth Battishill after the death of her brother Pinsent, and that the heir-at-law of Robert Tapson, Clerk, was his aunt *Elizabeth Tapson of Tavistocke Spinster*, who must have been the sister of Robert Tapson, Gent. George Fursdon, the executor named in Robert's will, would therefore have been the feoffee to uses (page 39) of the properties devised to him, holding them for the use and benefit of Elizabeth Tapson. These documents also make reference to the Messuage of Blackbroom in Bridestowe and the Manor of Houghton in Highweek, two of the parishes listed in Robert's will.

With the exception of Sampford Spiney, all the parishes listed in the will are to the east or the north of Dartmoor in the areas associated with the Battishill family. This might indicate that Robert Tapson, Gent, inherited his property in Sampford Spiney from his father, who may well have been, as suggested earlier (page 91), the *Mr Robert Tapson* buried in that parish on 13 July 1721. Having expectations of his own would no doubt have made Robert Tapson socially acceptable to the Battishill family. Robert's continuing link with Sampford Spiney after leaving that parish is confirmed by five copies of the *Poll Book for the County Election of 1712* (DRO QS51/1/1-5) which includes, on page 6, *Robert Tapson of Drewsteignton for Sampford Spiney*; this would have been the year before his marriage to Elizabeth Battishill.

3.15 THE RIGHT WORSHIPFULL JOHN TAPSON OF PLYMOUTH, GROCER

The Pinsent pedigree (page 92) shows a further union between the Tapson and the Battishill families. This marriage occurred just five years after the marriage of Robert Tapson and Elizabeth Battishill, the marriage allegation* being dated 17 June 1718:

John Tapson of Plymouth, Grocer, & Agnes Battishill of Ilsington, Spinster

Agnes was Elizabeth's youngest sister. However, the marriage was to be short-lived, for only nine months after the issue of the marriage licence a burial was recorded in the Ilsington register:

10 Mar 1718 Agnes Tapson wife of John Tapson Gent

The original meaning of the word *grocer* implied a wholesale merchant and not, as nowadays, the owner of a small retail outlet. The Company of Grocers, founded in 1344, was a body of wholesale dealers in spices and foreign produce, so it seems probable that John was an importer of foodstuffs and probably had warehouses on the quayside at Plymouth. In the Sessions Book of the Borough of Plymouth (WDRO W52-53), a list of jurors for the year 1711 includes the name *John Tapson Grocer*, which probably implies that John was a freeman of the Borough. Subsequently John's name occurs several times in this context — certainly in 1724, 1726, 1727, 1729 and 1730. John, as a master grocer, took on apprentices in 1712 and 1717 (PRO IR17/17,28).

The Receiver of Plymouth was a member of the Corporation appointed to the post for one year. The Receivers' Book of Accounts IV (WDRO W133) gives the incomings and outgoings for each year; the list of receipts for the mayoral year 1719-20 begins

Here followeth the acct of Mr John Tapson Receiver of the burro of Plym. from the nine and twentieth day of September ....1719 to the nine and twentieth day of September .... 1720 in the Mayoralty of the Rt Worshipfull Wm Bartlett Gould

This is followed by the list of items received, totalling £1000 - 07 - 03½. The expenditure for the same year is headed

Here followeth an acct of such charges as have been disbursed and laid out by the said Receiver Mr John Tapson for the said year ....

The items listed total £874 - 01 - 03¼; this left a balance of £126 - 06 - 00¼

to be paid by Mr John Tapson the late Receiver to Mr Matthew Roe the present Receiver

Subsequently, in 1721, 1724 and 1736, John Tapson was one of the auditors. And the accounts for 1730-31 are introduced thus:

Here follows the Account of Mr Michael Nicolls Receiver of the Burrough of Plymouth from the nine and twentieth day of September .... 1730 to the nine and twentieth day of September .... 1731 in the Mayoralty of the Rt Worshipfull John Tapson Grocer

So John had been elected First Citizen of the Borough.

The year after his mayoralty John bought a lease on land in the parish of Bickleigh, which is immediately to the south-east of Buckland Monachorum parish; the conveyancing indenture (WDRO 70/170) is dated 12 June 1732:

*J.H. MANN: Exeter Marriage Licences 1631-1762

Assignment of Lease dated 12 June 1732

This indenture made the Twelth Day of June .... 1732 Between Madam Mary Dean of Maristow in the County of Devon Widow of the One part And John Tapson of Plymouth in the County aforesaid Grocer of the other partt Witnesseth thatt the said Madam Mary Dean for and in consideracon of the sum of One Hundred and Eighty pounds of lawfull Brittish money to her in hand paid by the said John Tapson .... Doth Demise Lease grant and to farm sett and lett unto the said John Tapson his Executors and Assigns the Reversion of All thatt Messuage and Tenement with the Appurtenances comonly called .... Bickleigh town and Halshill situate lying and being within the Mannor and parish of Bickleigh .... and now in the possession of the said John Tapson .... And all Orchards gardens Meadows pastures feedings underwoods and other Appurtenances .... Together with common of pasture upon Roborough down and Woollwell down belonging to the said Mannor of Bickleigh for soe many Beasts Cattle and Sheep as the said premisses can keep in winter Excepting and always reserving outt of this demise and Lease unto the said Madam Mary Dean her heirs and Assigns all Timbertrees of Oake ash and Elm and all coppice woods now growing or hereafter to grow in and upon the premisses with free liberty to her and them att all times to .... fell down work up and carry away the same att all times. To lease .... unto the said John Tapson ....for and during the full term and time of Ninety Nine Years .... Iff That Robertt Tapson son of Robertt Tapson of Ingsdon .... gent and John Dipford son of John Dipford of Tavistock .... Mercer or Either of them shall soe long happen to live .... (the said Estate and term to commence and begin in possession imediately from and after the death and decease of the said John Tapson Yielding and paying then therefore from and after the commencement of the term hereby granted) unto the said Madam Mary Dean .... the yearly rent of Thirty shillings....

The document then stipulates ploughing and harvesting work required to be carried out on the *Barton of Maristow* by John Tapson or Robert Tapson or John Dipford (or money in lieu) and work to be undertaken on the mill-leat of the manor of Bickleigh, as well as detailed maintenance requirements on the demised premises, with penalties for non-compliance or for failure to pay the rent. The indenture is endorsed

Mannor de Bickleigh *Mr Jno Tapson for Bickleigh town and Halshill*
Dat 12th of June 1732 *Lives Robt Tapson Junr* *Jno Dipford Junr*
Rent 1 - 10 - 0 *Harvest Journey 0 - 0 - 4* *Plough Day 0 - 2 - 6*
(Total) £1 - 12 - 10

Presumably John had bought the lease on the property at Bickleigh in preparation for his retirement. Then, less than two years later, he remarried; the marriage entry in the parish register of Pitminster, near Taunton, Somersetshire, reads:

11 Feb 1734 Mr John Tapson & Mrs Hannah Webb of Bickleigh, by licence

John's burial is recorded in the register of Plymouth St. Andrew:

29 Jul 1738 Mr John Tapson

Possibly because he had no children, John had failed to make a will. Administration of his estate was granted by the Prerogative Court of Canterbury (PRO PROB6/114 Fo. 124) on 18 August 1738 to his widow:

On the Eighteenth day issued forth a Commission to Hannah Tapson widow the Relict of John Tapson late of Plymouth in the County of Devon deceased to Administer the Goods, Chattells and Credits of the said deceased being first sworn by Commission duly to administer.

Hannah remarried once more; the marriage allegation,* which confirms that she had continued to live at Bickleigh, is dated 1 December 1742:

Christopher Keene of St. Andrews, Esq. & Hannah Tapson of Bickleigh, widow

An insight into John's earlier life can be gained from a Bill of Complaint which John presented to the Court of Chancery on 25 October 1690 (PRO C5/72/12). The Answer to this Chancery suit has not survived.

*J.H. MANN: Exeter Marriage Licences 1631-1762

3.16 CHANCERY SUIT: JOHN TAPSON v EMANUEL BARBOZA DE MORIE

25 Oct 90 *To the Right Honorable the Lords Comissioners for the custody of the Greate Seale of England*

Humbly complayneing sheweth unto your Lordshipps your orator John Tapson of Plymouth in the County of Devon Yeoman, that on or about the eighteenth day of march last past one Emanuel Barboza de morie otherwise Emanuel Corley Master of a small shippe or vessell called the Delasa of or belonging to Portugall arrived in the said shippe or vessell in the Porte of Plymouth aforesaid where the said vessell proveing very leaky the said Master thought itt necessary for the preservation of both the said shippe and her loading to unload the said shippe in Plymouth which hee accordingly did and hired three rooms and one Cellar of your orator for placeing and keeping parte of her loading in, and imployed and intrusted one Francis Jones of Plymouth marchant with the charge of the said shippe and her loading, and haveing occasion for mony for paying the charges of unloading the said shippe and for buying necessarys requested your orator to buy of him some Sugar part of her said loading that hee might have mony for that use and purpose, And your orator to supply his said occasions did on or about the said Eighteenth day of March buy of him nine hundred fifty and six pound weight of Sugar att the rate and price of four pence halfepenny per pound which in the whole amounts to the sume of nineteene pounds and nineteene shillings sterling, and your orator haveing soe bought the same and discoursing with the said Emanuel Barboza de morie otherwise Corley concerning the tyme for payment, the said Emanuel told your orator that hee would call for the said mony as his occasions did from tyme to tyme require or give your orator order for payment thereof, and then promised your orator that hee would either pay your orator for the use and hire of the said three rooms and Cellar soe much mony as hee should reasonably deserve for the tyme hee kept them or otherwise would allow soe much to your orator out of the mony due for the said Sugar and did likewise promise that hee would alsoe either pay or allow to you orator tenne shillings for damages done to your orators house by the said shippe when shee first came into the Harbour itt beeing then Stormy and tempestuous weather, which forced the said shippe against your orators house bordering upon and adjoyneing to the sea shore or strand in Plymouth, And att severall tymes afterwards your orator paid unto the said Emanuel or his order severall sumes of mony the whole amounteing to the sume of eighteene pounds five shillings and four pence, And on or about the fifth day of Aprill last past your orator and the said Emanuel Barboza de morie otherwise Corley came to an account together and your orator in his account did charge the said Emanuel with tenne shillings for the damages done to his said house and with three pounds for the use and hire of his said three rooms and Cellar, both which sumes the said Emanuel readily allowed of, beeing well satisfyed in his Judgement that soe much damage was done by his said shippe to your orators house and that your orator did reasonably deserve three pounds for the use and hire of the said rooms and Cellar, And your orator in his said accompt craved an allowance of the said sume of eighteene pounds five shillings and four pence soe paid by your orator unto the said Emanuel and his order att severall tymes for the said Sugar as aforesaid, and the said Emanuel willingly consented thereunto well knowing that the same was really paid as in the said accompt was mentioned which said sume of eighteene pounds five shillings and four pence beeing added to the said two other sumes of tenne shillings and three pounds the whole amounteing to one and Twenty pounds fifteene shillings and four pence, soe that the said Emanuel became indebted to your orator by the said accompt the sume of one pound sixteene shillings and four pence over and above the said nineteene pounds and nineteene shillings which your orator was to pay him for the said Sugar, and the said Emanuel knowing the said accompt to bee just and faire approved thereof and promised your orator to pay unto him the said ballance of the said accompt, And afterwards (that is to say) on or about the twentyeth day of the said month of Aprill the said Emanuel Barboza de morie otherwise Emanuel Corley came to your orator and acquainted him that his the said Emanuels occasions did require him to leave England for some tyme, butt that hee had left the Cargoe of his Shippe with the said Francis Jones and that hee had ordered the said Francis Jones to pay unto your orator the said balance of his said account and your orator beleiveing the faire protestations of the said Emanuel and expecting to be paid the said one pound sixteene shillings and four pence by the said Francis Jones your orator demanded the same from him butt the said Francis Jones utterly refused to pay your orator after the said Emanuels

departure out of England which was in the latter end of the said moneth of Aprill sometymes pretending that hee had not sold any of the said Cargoe and raised any mony for payment thereof, and att other tymes declareing that the said Emanuel had nott given him any order for the payment of the said Balance, and shortly after the departure of the said Emanuel out of England as aforesaid the said Francis Jones instead of paying your orator the said one pound sixteene shillings and four pence the balance of the said accompt which was justly due unto your orator as aforesaid, caused your orator to be arrested in the name of the said Emanuel Barboza de morie by virtue of some writt or processe out of their majesties Court of Kings Bench at Westminster for the said sume of nineteene pounds and nineteen shilling and presented the accon to a Tryall at the last Assizes held for the Citty of Exon, And because your orators witneses whoe could prove the payment of the said sume of eighteene pounds five shillings and four pence to the said Emanuel att severall tymes as aforesaid and his allowing of the said severall sumes of tenne shillings and three pounds upon the adjusting and pasing the said accompt as aforesaid were nott present att the said Tryall nor could bee produced by your orator they being gone beyond the seas and into parts remote and unknowne to your orator soe that your orator could make noe defence to the said accon, a verdict was obteyned against your orator for nineteene pounds or thereabout and the said Francis Jones threatens that hee will cause Judgement to be entred against your orator for the same together with costs of Suite, All which doings are an apparent wrong and Injustice to your orator and your orator is wholy remedilesse in the premisses butt by the aid and favour of this Honorable Court, To the end therefore that the said Emanuel Barboza de morie otherwise Emanuell Corley may on his corporall oath true answers make to every particular of this Bill as fully as if the same were repeated or Interrogated againe, and in the meane tyme the said accon att Law and the proceedings thereon may bee stayed by Injuncon of this Honorable Court and that your orator may bee releived in all and singular the premisses according to right Equity and good conscience May itt please your Lordshipps to grant unto your orator as well their majesties most gracious writt of Injuncon to bee directed to the said Emanuel Barboza de morie otherwise Emanuel Corley his Councells Attorneys and Agents comanding them and every and either of them respectively to desist and forbear all further prosecution of your orator att Law for any the matters aforesaid untill the same shall bee heard and determined before your Lordshipps in this Honorable Court, As also their majesties most Gracious writt of Subpena to bee directed to the said Emanuel Barboza de morie otherwise Emanuel Corley thereby comanding him att a certaine day and under a certaine payne therein to bee limitted personally to bee and appeare before your Lordshipps in this Honorable Court then and there on his corporall oath to answere all and singular the premisses and further to stand to and abide such further order and direccon and decree herein, As to your Lordshipps shall seeme most agreeable to Equity and good conscience, And your orator shall ever pray etc

Once again we have an instance of appeal to Chancery after an action had already commenced in a lower court, in this case the Assizes held at the *Citty of Exon* (Exeter) following upon a writ issuing from the King's Bench, the supreme court of common-law jurisdiction. The cost of 956 pounds of sugar at 4½d per pound would not amount to £19 - 19 - 0 as stated in the Bill of Complaint; this would be the cost of 1064 pounds, which is exactly 9½ hundredweight. Apart from this error, the calculations are correct. John must have been quite a young man at the time of this Chancery suit, which was initiated 28 years before he married Agnes Battishill. However, one assumes that he would have been at least 20 years old at the time, so he must have been born before 1670, and therefore would have been 68 years old or more when he died in 1738.

Robert Tapson Junior, one of the *lives* named in the 1732 purchase of the lease at Bickleigh, was then nearly 15 years old. *John Dipford son of John Dipford of Tavistock .... Mercer*, the second of the *lives*, would seem to have been a son of *John Diftford of Tavistock (A Mercer)* who married *Johan Tapson* at Sampford Spiney on 16 May 1704, *Johan Tapson* being a daughter of *Mr Robert Tapson* (page 90). This fact strongly suggests that *John Tapson, Grocer* was a brother of both *Johan Tapson* and *Robert Tapson, Gentleman*, all being children of *Mr Robert Tapson,* and that the *lives* were two of John's nephews; another child of *Mr Robert Tapson* would therefore have been *Elizabeth Tapson of Tavistocke Spinster* (page 92). These probable relationships are now displayed in an enlarged, but tentative, family tree of the descendants of Robert Tapson of Bratton Clovelly.

3.17 GEORGE TAPSON OF STEPNEY, MARINER

One of the earliest of the Tapsons to make his home and to raise his family in the capital was George Tapson of Stepney. At that time Stepney was strictly not in London, but in Middlesex; it is now practically conterminous with the *East End* of London, the district containing the docks which line the Thames to its south. Richard and Mary (page 24) had lived at Whitechapel, the western part of Stepney immediately to the east of the City of London; George was married at Shadwell, the southern quarter of Stepney close to the docks, in the church of St. Paul (GLRO):

6 Jan 1697 George Tapson mariner and bachelder and Elizabeth Nedels spinster both of this parish by Licance both Liveing neer Shadwell Dock in Lower Shadwell

George had joined His Majesty's Ship the Victory as Master's Mate on 25 May 1696. The Treasurers' Pay Book for the Victory's commissioning which *Began Rigging Wages 8th Octb 95, Sea Wages 10th Nov 95, Ended Wages 6 Dec 97* (PRO ADM33/185) gives the complement of the ship as 754 and has the entry:

Time of Entry	Name	Quality	Time of Discharge	Whither
25 May 1696	*Geo Tapson*	*Ma Mate to 20 Feb 96/7 then 5th Leiutenant*	*D 5 Aug 97*	*Rochester*

	Chest	Greenwich Hospital	Full Wages	Neat Wages
167 days at vjs per diem	*9 - 9*	*7 - 11*	*82 - 8 - 8*	*81 - 11 - 0*

Like the Chatham Chest (page 29), the Greenwich Hospital was a charitable foundation; as a home for infirm seamen it dated from 1694, and was supported by 6d a month deducted from the wages of both naval and merchant seamen. It employed seamen's widows in its infirmary and provided a school for children of officers and men, especially orphans. George had received his first commission after nine months of apprenticeship as Master's Mate: his wages for the 167 days which he served as Fifth Lieutenant at six shillings a day would have amounted to £50 - 2 - 0; perhaps the remaining £32 - 6 - 8 of his gross wages was pay due to him for the time he had spent as Master's Mate.

George's next commission was on the Rochester. The Treasurers' Pay Book for the commissioning of that ship which *Began Sea Wages and Victuals 1 Oct 94, Ended Wages 6 Dec 97* (PRO ADM33/192) notes that her complement was 226 and includes:

Time of Entry	Whence	Name	Quality	Greenwich Hospital	Full Wages	Neat Wages
6 Aug 1697	*Victory*	*Geo Tapsonne*	*2ndLieut.*	*2 - 3*	*30 - 17 - 3*	*30 - 15 - 0*

A further column reads *Neglect and Fines 9 - 10*. This commissioning of the Rochester ended just one month before George's wedding, and his name does not appear in the Pay Book for her next commissioning (PRO ADM33/206), which *Began Rigging Wages 23 Mar 1697/8*.

It may be that George worked for a while on merchant ships, for he was not employed again on one of His Majesty's vessels until two and a half years after leaving the Rochester, this time as a warrant officer, Midshipman Extraordinary (page 28), on the Dorsetshire, as we learn from the Pay Book for that ship (PRO ADM33/215) for her commissioning which *Began Sea Wages as a Guard Ship in Portsmouth harbour ... the 6 Febry 99/1700* and *Ended Wages 17 Sep 1700*:

Time of Entry	Whence	Name	Quality	Chest	Greenwich Hospital	Full Wages	Neat Wages
June 1st 1700	*London*	*Geo Tapson*	*Mids Extra*	*2 - 3*	*1 - 2*	*4 - 6 - 10*	*4 - 3 - 5*

George returned home to see for the first time the daughter who had been born while he was at sea and who had been baptized at Shadwell St. Paul, the church where he had married:

18 Aug 1700 Mary dau of George Tapson and Elizabeth his wife being then Six days ould mariner in Spring Stret

The baptism at Shadwell St. Paul of a second daughter soon followed:

25 Nov 1701 Elizabeth dau of George Tapson and Elizabeth his wife being then Nine dayes old mariner in Spring Street

George and Elizabeth then moved to the Ratcliff district of Stepney, where further baptisms followed; these took place in the church of St. Dunstan, Stepney (GLRO), an ancient church of which the present buildings date mainly to the Fifteenth Century:

13 Jun 1703 George son of George & Elizabeth Tapson, Ratcl. Marin. 13 days old

14 Jan 1706 Richard son of George & Elizabeth Tapson, Ratcliff, Mariner 2..? days old

20 Apr 1708 Elizabeth dau of George & Elizabeth Tapson, Ratc. Marr. 17 days old

Although George is described in these baptismal entries as a mariner, there is no evidence of his further service in the Royal Navy after he left the Dorsetshire in 1700, so he must have worked on merchant ships.

3.18 GEORGE TAPSON JUNIOR OF STEPNEY, MARINER

The next reference to a George Tapson in the naval records does not occur until twenty five years later, in the Treasurers' Pay Book for the commission of the Hampton Court which *Began Rigging Wages at Chatham 29 Jan 1725, Sea Wages 10 Mar 1725, Ended Wages 30 Jun 1726, Paid at the Nore 15 Apr 1725* (PRO ADM33/314). The complement of the Hampton Court is stated to be 440, and the following item is included:

Time of Entry	*Name*	*Quality*	*Time of Discharge*	*Greenwich Hospital*	*Full Wages*	*Neat Wages*
17 Jan 1725	*Geo Tapson*	*1st Lt*	*D 1 Mar 1725/6*	*8*	*7 - 4 - 0*	*7 - 3 - 4*

Whilst it is possible that this entry refers to the George Tapson who served as Midshipman Extra on the Dorsetshire in 1700, it is perhaps more likely that the First Lieutenant on the Hampton Court was his son, who would have been 22½ years old on 17 January 1725/6.

The following item appears in the Allegations Records of the Registry of the Bishop of London (GL MS10091):

9 July 1730 Appeared personally Rachel Martin of the parish of Stepney in the County of Middlesex aged twenty eight years and a spinster and alleged that she intendeth to marry with George Tapson of the same parish Widdower and that she knoweth of no lawful Let or Impediment by reason of any precontract, Consanguinity, Affinity or any other lawful means whatsoever to hinder the said intended Marriage of the truth of which she made Oath and prayed licence to solemnize the said Marriage in the church of St. Bartholomew the Great London (Signed) Rachel Martin

This marriage allegation too could refer to George Tapson the father, but again it is perhaps more likely that Rachel's intended husband was his son, who would have been in his twenty eighth year at the time, about the same age as Rachel. The wedding is duly recorded in the register of St. Bartholomew the Great, Smithfield, in the City of London (GL):

11 Jul 1730 George Tapson of the Parish of St Dunstan Stepney in the County of Middlesex Widower & Rachel Martin of the same Parish Spinster by Licence in the presence of Samuel Rossell

The wedding was followed by baptisms at Stepney St. Dunstan:

15 Dec 1730 George son of Capt Geo Tapson of Rat Gent & Rachel 13 days old

4 Nov 1734 Martin & Thomas sons of Capt Geo Tapsome of Rat Marr & Rachel

There is no further mention of George Tapson in the naval records; since he is described in these baptismal entries as a Captain, it would seem that he served on merchant ships after his discharge from the Hampton Court. Further evidence is needed before it is possible to be absolutely certain that all these references are to George Tapson Junior rather than to his father; in particular, no evidence has yet come to light of his first marriage. George Tapson Junior would have been 38 when the following will was made:

The Will of George Tapson dated 17 February 1741

In the Name of God Amen I George Tapson of Ratcliffe in the Parish of Stepney in the County of Middlesex Gentleman being in health of Body and of Sound Mind and Memory Praised be Almighty God and duly Considering the uncertainty of this life do make publish and declare my last Will and Testament in manner and form following that is to say first and principally I commend my immortal Soul into the hands of Almighty God my Creator and Merciful Father and my body I appoint to be decently buried at the Discretion of my Executrix hereinafter named in good hope of a happy resurrection to Eternal Life by and through the Merits and Intercession of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and all and Singular my Worldly Estate I give devise and bequeath as followeth to wit I will and appoint that all my just Debts and Funeral Charges and Expenses shall be fully paid and ..?..ed and I give devise and bequeath unto my dearly beloved Wife Rachell Tapson to and for her own use and profit all and Singular my Household Goods and Furniture also I give devise and bequeath unto my said Wife Rachell Tapson yearly and every year for and during the Term of her natural Life an Annuity or Yearly Sum of one hundred pounds of lawful Money of Great Britain to be Issuing and Payable to her out of and by the Interest Income Dividends Profits and Proceed of all and Singular my Personal Estate whatsoever half yearly by equal portions the first half yearly payment whereof to begin and be made at Lady Day or Michaelmas Day at which of the said Feast Days shall first happen after my decease and all and Singular my Monies Debts Stock Annuities Interest Dividends Goods Chattels and Estate whatsoever I give devise and bequeath the same unto my Son Thomas Tapson to be paid and delivered to him at his age of Twenty one years But in case my said son Thomas shall happen to dye before he attains the said age of one and Twenty years Then in such Case I give devise and bequeath all and Singular my said Monies Debts Stock Annuities Interest Dividends Goods Chattels and all other my Estate of what nature or kind soever unto my said dearly beloved Wife Rachell Tapson to and for her own use and benefit and to give away and dispose of the same in such manner as she shall think well and I name appoint and make my said Wife Rachell Tapson sole Executrix of this my last Will and Testament and Lastly I do hereby revoke and make void all other Wills by me at any time heretofore made published and declared and do publish and declare these presents to be and contain my last Will and Testament In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my Hand and Seal this seventeenth day of February in the year of our Lord one Thousand Seven hundred forty one and in the fifteenth year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord King George the Second *George Tapson*

George's will (PRO PROB11/777 Fo.116) was proved at London in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury on 13 February 1749/50 *by the oath of Rachell Tapson Widow the Relict of the deceased.* George seems to have been very successful financially — an annuity of £100 from interest suggests a capital of at least £2,000 (on the basis of the usual 5% per annum interest rate at that time), a useful sum of money in 1750. It would appear that Thomas was his only surviving child; he would have been 15 years old when the will was proved.

3.19 THOMAS TAPSON OF STEPNEY, GENTLEMAN

George's son Thomas was registered at the Merchant Taylors' School from 1746/7 to 1747, so he seems to have attended the school for no more than a year (unless records for other years are missing). [Merchant Taylors' School was founded in 1561 by the Merchant Taylors' Company as a public school for boys.] He would indeed have been 22 when the following entry was made in the Allegations Records of the Registry of the Bishop of London (GL MS10091):

> *16 Nov 1756 Appeared personally Thomas Tapson and made oath that he is of St Dunstan Stepney in the County of Middlesex aged about Twenty Two years and a Batchelor and intendeth to marry with Frances Fisher of the same parish a Spinster aged upwards of Twenty years by the Consent of Mary Fisher her natural and lawfull Mother ...to solemnize in the parish church of St Dunstan Stepney aforesaid (Signed) Tho^{s} Tapson, Mary Fisher, Geo Harris Surrogate*

The marriage was duly solemnized in the church of Stepney St. Dunstan:

20 Jan 1757 Thomas Tapson of this Parish and the Hamlet of Mile End Old Town Gent and Frances Fisher of this Parish and the same Hamlet Spinster by Licence in the presence of W^m^ Connoply(?), Richard Bradley

and it was followed by the baptisms, also at the church of St. Dunstan:

28 Jun 1759 Frances dau of Thomas Tapson MEOT Gent and Frances 19 days old

3 Sep 1761 Thomas son of Thomas Tapson of Ratcliffe Gent & Frances 20 days old

MEOT is an abbreviation for Mile End Old Town, where Thomas and Frances were living.

Soon after the baptism of their second child Thomas and Frances must have moved out to the parish of Bromley (probably Bromley-by-Bow to the east of Stepney) and Thomas's mother, Rachael, was also living there when she died, for this was her address given in the P.C.C. Admon (PRO PROB6/141 Fo.237) dated 27 March 1765:

Rachael Tapson On the twenty seventh day Admon of the Goods Chattels and Credits of Rachael Tapson late of the Parish of Bromley in the County of Middlesex Widow deceased was granted to Thomas Tapson the natural and lawful Son of the said deceased he having been first sworn duly to administer

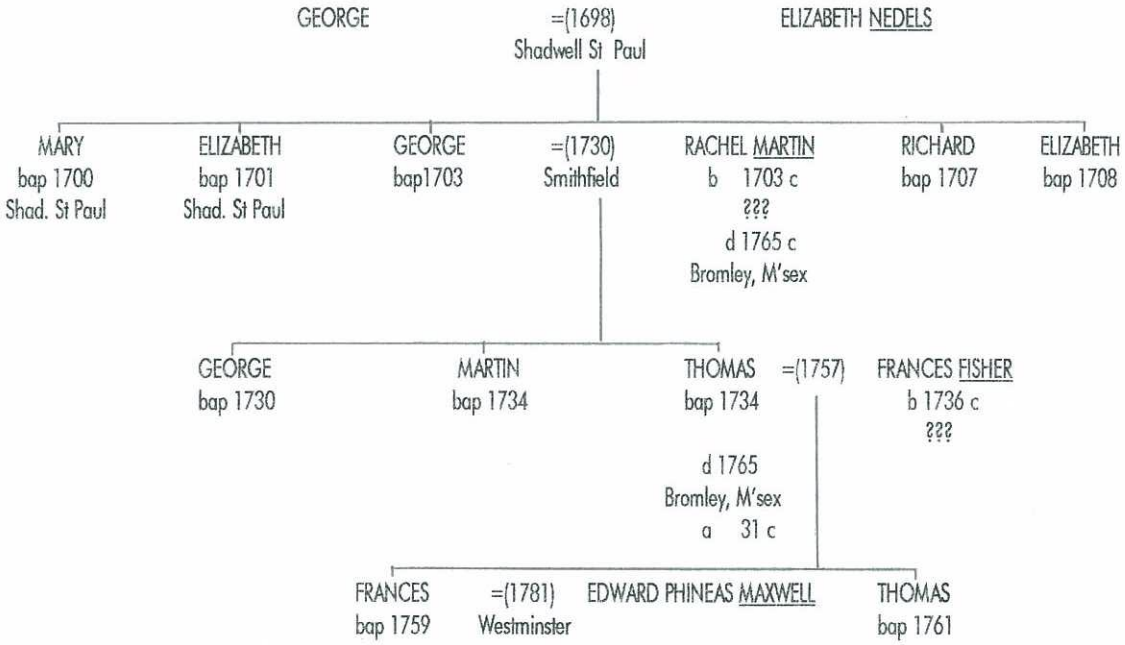
Thomas was to die soon afterwards; another P.C.C. Admon (PRO PROB6/141 Fo. 265) is dated 16 October 1765:

Thomas Tapson On the sixteenth day Admon of the Goods Chattels and Credits of Thomas Tapson late of the Parish of Bromley Saint Leonard in the County of Middlesex deceased was granted to Frances Tapson Widow the Relict of the said deceased she having been first sworn duly to administer

Frances, the daughter of Thomas and Frances, would have been 22 at the time of her wedding, attended by her mother, at St. Martin in the Fields in the City of Westminster (CWAC):

30 Oct 1781 Edward Phineas Maxwell Esq^r^ & Frances Tapson both of this Parish by Licence in the presence of John Henderson(?) & Frances Tapson

Descendants of George Tapson of Stepney



It is not certain whether Rachel Martin married George, the father, or George, the son. Except where otherwise indicated, all baptisms, marriages and burials took place at Stepney St. Dunstan.

CHAPTER 4

EBSWORTHY TOWN AND FREESABEARE

4.1 ETBOLDUS WRDA

About 13 miles to the north of Buckland Monachorum, in the parish of Bridestowe, lies a property known as Ebsworthy, which has played such an important part in the Tapson story that it seems appropriate to devote a whole chapter to it, to the family which by early in the Seventeenth Century had owned it for many generations, and to the branch of the Tapson family to which it was then about to pass. On this property there had grown up a hamlet which became known as Ebsworthy Town; Ebsworthy Town is nearly a mile north-west of Bridestowe village down a long country lane which is little more than a farm track.

The ancient name of the farm known as Ebsworthy is said to come from the Anglo-Saxon *Ecgbeald's Worðig**, meaning *Ecgbeald's Enclosure*, the earliest recorded mention of the property being in the Domesday Book of 1086. [The Anglo-Saxon letter ð is pronounced as *th*.] Quickly after 1066 William, the Conqueror, had set in motion a very full survey of his newly-acquired realm; for the five western shires this Domesday survey is epitomized in his Exchequer Book and also in another volume known as the Exeter Book. The following extract relating to the Manor of Bridestowe is a translation from the Latin based on the Exeter Book†, which is much fuller than the Exchequer Book. The six properties mentioned are all shown on modern Ordnance Survey maps.

A *hide*, referred to in this extract, was originally the amount of land considered sufficient to support one family; it was defined at an early date as being as much land as could be tilled by one plough, and it could measure anything between 90 and 120 acres, according to the type of soil and the lie of the land. Later it became a tax-assessment unit on which the *geld* (the *Danegeld*, a tribute exacted in England by the Danes) was paid. A *ferling* was usually taken to be a quarter of a hide.

*GOVER, MAWER & STENTON: The Place-Names of Devon (2 Vol) C.U.P. 1931

†VICTORIA HISTORY OF THE COUNTIES OF ENGLAND — DEVONSHIRE VOL 1, Reprint, Dawson 1975

Extract from the Domesday Book of 1086

THE LAND OF BALDWIN THE SHERIFF IN DEVENESIRA (DEVONSHIRE)

Baldwin has a manor called BRIDESTOU [Bridestowe] *which Edmer held on the day on which King Edward was alive and dead* [5 January 1066] *and it paid geld for half a hide and half a ferling. This six ploughs can till. Now Ralf de Pomaria* [Pomeroy] *holds it of Baldwin. There R*[alf] *has two ploughs in demesne and the villeins four. There R*[alf] *has nine villeins, four bordars, eight serfs, one rouncey* [pack-horse], *six beasts, ten swine, one hundred and thirty five sheep, twenty goats, forty acres of woodland, twelve acres of meadow and thirty acres of pasture. Worth four pounds and was worth sixty shillings when B*[aldwin] *received it.*

Along with this manor Baldwin holds the land of six thanes which did not belong to the aforesaid manor on the day on which King Edward was alive and dead. In King E[dward]'s *time it paid geld for half a hide and one and a half ferlings. This six ploughs can till. One of these six lands is called CARSFORDA* [Kersford] *which Sawin Topa held. Another is called BATESILLA* [Battishill] *which Dodo held. A third COMBA* [Combe] *which Dodo held. A fourth ETBOLDUS WRDA* [Ebsworthy] *which Godwin held. A fifth FERNEURDA* [Fernworthy] *which Godwin held. And the sixth WEIA* [Way] *which Abbot Suatric held. These thanes could go with that land to any lord they liked. That land is worth sixty shillings all but twenty pence, and was worth thirty shillings when B*[aldwin] *received it.*

The Conqueror granted lands to his barons conditional upon their providing knights for the King's service.* In turn the knights were granted manors under the barons, many holding as much land as some of the minor barons. By 1205 some 4000 knights had secured exemption from military service on payment of a fine or tax known as *scutage*, and knight service had been replaced by a paid army, the scutage being used to pay the fighting knights.

The Domesday manor consisted of *demesne* (the home farm of the lord of the manor), freeholders' land, and villagers' land. A *thane* was a freeman who could change his lord at will. A *villein* was a tenant of manorial land which he held on condition of particular amounts of labour service, known as *socage*, on the lord's demesne; he was free in regard to everyone except his feudal lord, which meant that he could not be bought or sold but he was bound to his holding. A *bordar* was a villein of the lowest rank — a smallholder — and the status of *serf* was even lower, in that even his body belonged to his lord.

In England serfdom, common at the time of Domesday, soon thereafter became extinct, the division then being into freemen and villeins. However, the distinction was not absolute: a freeman might acquire land to which a liability attached for villein services, and intermarriage was frequent, though the offspring of a free woman by a villein was a villein. Between 1300 and 1500 the villeins' obligation to work in the lord's fields was by degrees abolished in favour of the payment of a money rent in lieu of socage. Before 1400 villeins were proving their legal right to their property by producing copies of the court roll (page 112) of the manor, this type of tenure therefore being known as *copyhold*, and on a villein's death his eldest son became the legal heir to the property. At about the same period the terms *husbandman* and *yeoman* came to be applied to workers of the land. At first the husbandman was usually a villein, whereas a yeoman was always a freeman; but by the Sixteenth Century the distinction seems to have been more a matter of wealth, and the terms *husbandman* and *yeoman* might even be applied to the same person.

Until about 1400 the term *gentleman* was used to describe any man of noble birth — a baron, a knight or a squire, the title *squire* or *esquire* being given to an apprentice knight, usually a descendant of a knight, before he was dubbed on coming of age. But in the Fifteenth Century *gentleman* came to be used to describe a person who had not been knighted but was a substantial landowner whose status was higher than that of a yeoman in that he did not himself have to work with his hands.

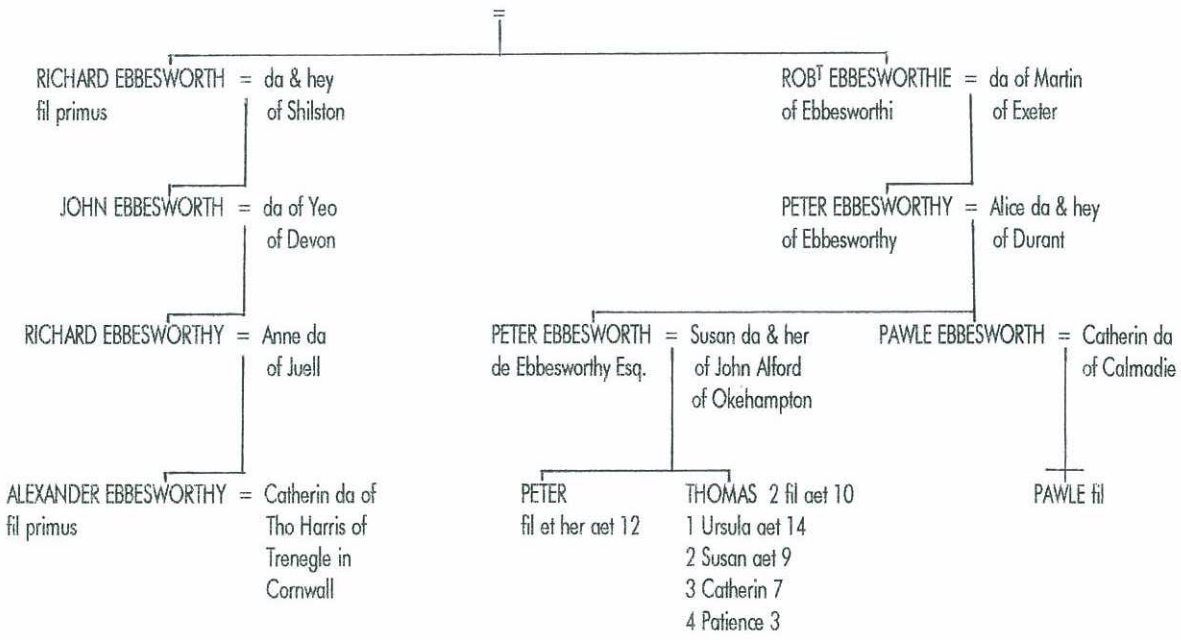
*A. WAGNER: English Genealogy, Phillimore 1960 (3rd ed. 1983)

By the Sixteenth Century many yeomen had acquired much land and could sometimes be far better off than their neighbouring gentry, who were so less by their wealth than by their status, their descent from an armorial bearing family, or their way of life. By the Seventeenth Century a humble tradesman could be a gentleman if he had descended from an ancient gentle family, whilst a successful yeoman could be leading the life of a gentleman, never needing to put is hand to the soil; and there was much intermarriage between the gentry and the yeomanry. Members of such professions as the army, the navy, the law and the church were regarded as gentlemen, some even being entitled to use the description *esquire*.

Armorial bearings were originally marks of identification for knights in armour. In the Thirteenth Century arms were becoming hereditary and by 1300 about 1500 families were armigerous, being male-line descendants of actual knights, so *heralds* were appointed to regulate the use of arms. In the Fifteenth Century the senior heralds, known as *Kings of Arms*, were given the right to grant arms to *men of virtue and repute, worthy to be received among noble gentlemen*. The Sixteenth Century saw minimum property requirements laid down (land worth £100 per annum or movables worth £360) before grants of arms could be approved. Since from the Fifteenth Century families had been adopting arms without permission, the Kings of Arms made tours of the country from 1530 onward to examine gentlemen's claims, taking into consideration personal knowledge, family muniments, family traditions and the records of previous visitations. The *Heralds' Visitations* continued until 1686, and these gave rise to a large number of written pedigrees of varying reliability.

4.2 EBBESWORTHIE OF EBBESWORTHIE

The *Original Visitation of Devon 1620** gives the following pedigree of the family of *Ebbesworthie*; it is signed by Peter Ebsworthy.



The following deeds of feoffment (page38), of which a translation is provided, were quoted to prove that the family had long held the land from which they had derived their name and to establish their right to be numbered among the landed gentry of Devonshire. The dates of these deeds are respectively the Sunday after 24 June 1317 (assuming that *King Edward son of King Edward* is King Edward II), the Tuesday before 25 March 1350, and the Thursday after 29 September 1445.

*HARLEIAN MS 1163 Fo. 149 British Library (MSS Department)

The 1317 Feoffment

Sciant præsentes et futuri quod ego Willelmus de Ebbellesworth dedi concessi et hac præsenti carta mea confirmavi pro me heredibus meis et assignatis magistro Johanni de Milliton et Waltero de Milleton fratri ejusdem Johannis heredibus eorum et assignatis totam terram meam in Esterlake etc. Dat. apud Bridistow die dominica proxima post festum Nativitatis Sancti Johannis Baptistæ anno regni regis Edwardi filii regis Edwardi decimo

[TRANSLATION Know men present and future that I, William of Ebbellesworth, have given, granted, and by this my present charter have confirmed, for me and my heirs and assigns, to Master John of Milliton and to Walter of Milleton, brother of the same John, their heirs and assigns all my lands in Esterlake etc. Dated at Bridistow the Sunday next after the feast of the Nativity of Saint John Baptist in the tenth year of the reign of King Edward son of King Edward.]

The 1350 Feoffment

Sciant præsentes et futuri quod ego Walterus de Milliton dedi concessi et hac præsenti carta mea confirmavi Johanni de Ebbellesworth filio Walteri de Ebbesworth etc. Dat. apud Milliton die Martis proximo ante festum Sanctæ ... anno regni regis Edwardi 3, 24

[TRANSLATION Know men present and future that I, Walter of Milliton, have given, granted, and by this my present charter have confirmed, to John of Ebbellesworth, son of Walter of Ebbesworth etc. Dated at Milliton the Tuesday next before the feast of the Holy [Lady] in the 24th year of the reign of King Edward 3.]

The 1445 Feoffment

Sciant præsentes et futuri quod ego Johannes Ebbesworthy dedi concessi et hac præsenti carta mea indentata confirmavi Waltero Hakeworthy de Okehampton omnia messuagia terras et tenementa mea reditus et reversiones cum omnibus pertentiis quæ habeo in villa de Ebbesworthy Est Bitslake Gnattor et Wadeston etc Dat. apud Ebbesworthie die Jovis proximo post festum Sancti Michaelis Archangeli anno regni regis Henrici 6 vicesimo quarto

[TRANSLATION Know men present and future that I, John Ebbesworthy, have given, granted, and by this my present indented charter have confirmed, to Walter Hakeworthy of Okehampton all my messuages, lands and tenements, rents and reversions, with all appurtenances, which I have in the town of Ebbesworthy, Est Bitslake, Gnattor and Wadeston etc. Dated at Ebbesworthie the Thursday next after the feast of Saint Michael the Archangel, in the twenty fourth year of the reign of King Henry 6.]

The feoffees to uses (page 39) were the Millitons of Milliton, another important landowning family in Bridestowe and near neighbours of the Ebsworthys; their pedigree is given in the Harleian Society edition of the *Visitation of Devonshire 1564 with additions from 1531*. Neither the Ebsworthys nor the Millitons had registered any arms with the College of Arms. The deeds of feoffment reveal that, besides the property from which they took their name, the Ebsworthys also owned, by 1445, the adjoining property of Easter Bidlake (sometimes referred to in later documents as Lower or Little Bidlake) as well as Gnattor (on the moors a good half dozen miles south in Peter Tavy parish, mid-way between Buckland Monachorum and Bridestowe, variously spelt *Nattor* or *Knattor*) and Wadeston (perhaps Waddlestone in the adjoining parish of Lewtrenchard, spelt *Wadeleston* in the Book of Fees of 1242). And if *Esterlake*, mentioned in the 1317 deed, refers to Easter Bidlake, as seems probable, then the Ebsworthys must already have acquired that property by 1317.

Fifteen years later the name *Andrew de Eboldesworthi* appears in the lay subsidy assessment of 1332 (page 13) for *Britstowe* (in Lifton hundred). The complete return for the parish, which is now given, is interesting because it clearly illustrates the point reached by the early part of the Fourteenth Century in the evolution of surnames. *(Cobham* was the manor; *Combe, Ebsworthy* and *Way* were listed in the Domesday survey as *Comba, Etboldus Wrda* and *Weia* and still appear on Ordnance Survey maps, as also do *Bidlake, Thorndon* and *Stone*.)

John de Cobeham	*6 s*	*8 d*
William de Combe	*2 s*	
John Biddelake		*12 d*
John Toker		*16 d*
John de Thorndon		*14 d*
Richard Thorndon		*16 d*
Geoffrey atte Weye		*12 d*
John of the same [Weye]		*8 d*
Roger Toker		*14 d*
Andrew de Eboldesworthi		*12 d*
Richard Uppehulle		*12 d*
William atte Stone		*12 d*
Richard of the same [Stone]		*8 d*
Geoffrey Schonke		*12 d*
James Mulward		*12 d*

The Harleian Society edition of the *1620 Visitation to Devonshire* states that Rafe de Combe had purchased Bidlake in 1309. This would have been Wester Bidlake, the next estate to Easter Bidlake owned by the Ebsworthys. His grandson John moved to Bidlake, built a house there and called himself John de Biddelake, whilst Rafe's son William, the father of John de Biddlake, remained at Combe. By early in the Seventeenth Century a feud had developed between the Bidlakes, who were armigerous, and the Ebsworthys, who had still not registered arms even though they were an equally ancient landowning family, having lived at Ebsworthy for at least as long as the Bidlakes had lived at Wester Bidlake. In 1613 another William Bidlake and his wife, Agnes, who had become involved in several quarrels with neighbours, drew up charges against the rector of Bridestowe, Gilbert Germyn, which also implicated two Ebsworthy brothers, Peter and Paul, and their wives. The rector had married a daughter to one of the Ebsworthys, thereby becoming involved in the quarrel between the Bidlakes and the Ebsworthys. William's father, John, wrote a letter to William and Agnes urging them to *seek peace and ensue it*, warning them that *suits of law are as variable as the turnings of a woadercock*. Nevertheless, John and his son William pursued a lawsuit against some members of the Ebsworthy family who were living at Stone and also against Shilston Calmady of Leawood: Paul Ebsworthy's wife, Catherine, was a daughter of Vincent Calmady of Wembury, a relative of Shilston Calmady of Leawood. Peter's wife was Susan, daughter and heir of John Alford, a former town clerk of Okehampton.

Having detailed the charges against the rector, William and Agnes then accused Peter Ebsworthy *for usurpinge of place in the Churche, being a man of no discent, or parentage, and claiminge a Seate unfittinge for a man of his ranke and position.* It is true that the Ebsworthys had not become as wealthy as the Bidlakes, but they were nevertheless of comfortable means and had made several marriages into armigerous families. Then came the further charge *Next for his wief abusing of my wief in goinge to the Communion, by blowes and afterwards with disgracefull words.* Then William and Agnes charged *Paule Ebsworthy for layinge of violent handes upon my wief in the Church yard: and his wiefs scouldinge, Katheren Ebsworthy using these wordes before the Parson unto her sister, Peter's wief, that her sister might be ashamed to suffer such to goe before her as my wief was.* The case against Parson Germyn was heard by the Bishop of Exeter at Okehampton in May 1613. William died in 1625, leaving a substantial personal estate of around £700; In 1641 Agnes moved to South Devon, where she died in 1651.

In the 1524-5 lay subsidy assessments for *Bridestaw* appear the names

Wm Ebbisworthe	*Goods*	*£5*
Walter Ebbisworthe	*Goods*	*£1*

In *Brydestowe* parish the list of taxpayers in the 1543-5 assessments includes

Richard Ebbesworthy	*Goods*	*£12*
Robert Ebbesworthy	*Goods*	*£12*
Thomas Ebbesworthy	*Goods*	*£....*
John Ebbesworthy	*Goods*	*£ 2*

And *John Ibsworthie* paid tax on land assessed at £1 in *Briddistowe Parish* in 1581.

In the 1569 Muster Rolls (page 12) *Richard Ebbesworthy* was listed as *an archer* in *Bridstowe & Sowerton Parrishes*. [The parish of Sourton adjoins that of Bridestowe.]

4.3 MARRIAGE SETTLEMENTS

By January 1610/1, a decade before the Heralds' visitation, the Ebsworthys had acquired a property adjoining Ebsworthy known as Blatchford (in Sourton parish), but they no longer owned Wadeston, for it was in this month that Richard Ebsworthy drew up a marriage settlement (DRO 189M Add2/F1) of Ebsworthy, Easter Bidlake, Blatchford and Knattor on his son, Alexander, and his intended wife, Katherine Harry, daughter of Thomas Harry of Treneglos, Cornwall, naming as feoffees to uses his kinsman Peter Ebsworthy and a kinsman of the Harrys. (See Pedigree, page 105).

Marriage Settlement dated 14 January 1610/1 (Abstract)

Indenture dated 14 January, 8 James, between

1. Richard Ebsworthye of Ebsworthye, Bridistowe, Devon, gentleman
2. Alexander Ebsworthye, *sonne & heir apparent* of Richard Ebsworthye
   Katherene Harrye, daughter of Thomas Harrye of Treneglos, Cornwall
3. Peter Ebsworthye of Bridistowe, gentleman
   Richard Harrye of Treneglos, yeoman

Witnesses that Richard Ebsworthye, *as well for the naturall love zeale and affection that he beareth unto Alexander Ebsworthye and in consideration of a marriage to be had* between Alexander and Katherene, gives, grants, and confirms unto Peter Ebsworthye and Richard Harrye all those messuages, lands, etc. called Ebsworthye in Bridistowe together with all his messuages, lands, etc. named Blachford in Soorton together with all his messuages, lands, etc. named Knattor in Wylsworthy in Petertavye to the following uses:

Ebsworthye and Est Bidlake to the use of
- a) Richard Ebsworthye and Agnes his wife for their lives

then
- b) Alexander Ebsworthye and his heirs forever;

Blachford and Knattor to the use of
- a) Richard Ebsworthye for life

then
- b) Alexander Ebsworthye and his heirs forever.

There are no parish registers for Bridestowe before 1696, but a few earlier bishop's transcripts survive, which record the marriage of

Alexander Ebsworthy & Katheren Harris the xxviij of January 1610

just 14 days after the date of the marriage settlement, and the baptism of a daughter, whose name is not legible, in May 1619 followed by her burial in July 1620. Alexander and Katheren had two other daughters, Agnes and Katherine, but no male heir; there is no surviving record of the baptisms of Agnes and Katherine. On 24 January 1633/4 Alexander, in his turn, drew up a marriage settlement (DRO 189M Add2/F2) of Ebsworthy, Ebsworthy Wood, Easter Bidlake, Blatchford and Gnattor on Agnes and the husband she had married the year before.

Since Mediæval times the documentation relating to a Fine (page 38) had increased, and one document of particular value to the genealogist, because it contains much more information than the official Court documents, is a private agreement drawn up between the parties declaring the intention of the party of the first part to levy a fine unto the party of the second part by the name or names of the property or properties to be conveyed. Such a document of intent is known as a *Deed to lead to the uses of a Fine*. The 1633/4 marriage settlement, a very long document, takes the form of a Deed to lead to the uses of a Fine, in which the party of the second part are feoffees to uses.

Freehold property could be held in *Fee Simple* or in *Fee Tail*. *Fee Simple* means a freehold estate which is both alienable and heritable; that is, the owner is free to sell, give away, or leave to his heirs, all or any part of it. *Fee Tail* means a freehold estate which is *entailed*; that is, settled on a number of persons in succession; as such it is inalienable, limited to a particular class of heir, and has to revert to the donor or his heirs upon failure of that class of heir. The 1633/4 marriage settlement establishes an elaborate Fee Tail on the Ebsworthy properties.

Marriage Settlement dated 24 January 1633/4 (Abstract)

Indenture dated 24 January, 9 Charles, between

1. *Alexander Ebbesworthie of Bridestowe in the Countey of Devon Gent*
2. *William Harrie of S^t^ Mellyon in the Countey of Cornwall yeoman*

John Tapson of Bucklande Monachorum in the saide Countey of Devon yeoman

WITNESSETH that the saide Alexander Ebbesworthie as well in consideration of a mariage alreadie had and solemnized between Nicholas Tapson of Bucklande Monachorum aforesaide yeoman the brother of the saide John Tapson and Agnes Ebbesworthie the eldest daughter of the saide Alexander Ebbesworthie ..... as also in consideration of the sume of Fiftie poundes of lawfull money of Englande alreadie paide by the saide Nicholas Tapson unto the saide Alexander Ebbesworthie and of Twoe hundred and Twentie poundes more to be paide by the saide Nicholas Tapson ..... unto the said Alexander Ebbesworthie ..... in manner and forme followinge, That is to saie Fiftie poundes parcell thereof on the xxjx^th^ daie of October ..... one Thousande sixe hundred Thirtie nyne and Threeskore and ten poundes more on the xxjx^th^ daie of October one Thousande sixe hundred and Fortie and one hundred poundes residue of the same on the xxjx^th^ daie of October ..... one Thousande sixe hundred Fortie one, which Twoe hundred and twentie poundes is intended by the said Alexander Ebbesworthie as a portion for the advancement in mariage of Katherine Ebbesworthie the youngest daughter of the said Alexander Ebbesworthie ..... he the saide Alexander Ebbesworthie shall and will before the Feast of the nativitie of St John Baptist next ensuinge the date hereof Levye one or more Fine or Fines with proclamations to be prosecuted in his majesties Courte of Common Pleas at Westminster unto the saide William Harrie and John Tapson of all that messuages Landes Tenements and Hereditaments with Thappurtennances [the appurtenances] *commonlie called by the severall name and names of Ebbesworthie Ebbesworthie Woode and Easter Bidlake sett lyenge and beinge within the said parishe of Bridestowe and abovesaid Countey of Devon and of all those messuages Landes Tenements and Hereditaments with Thappurtennances commonlie called by the severall name and names of Blachford and Gnattor also Knattor with Thappurtennances sett lyenge and beinge within the severall parishes of Sourton and Peterstavie*, William Harry and John Tapson to be seised of the said properties to the following uses:

Ebbesworthie Wood, Blachforde and Gnattor to the use of

a) Alexander Ebbesworthie for life

then b) Nicholas Tapson and Agnes and their heirs

then c) the lawful heirs of Agnes in default of issue of Nicholas Tapson and Agnes

then d) the heirs of Alexander Ebbesworthie in default of issue of Agnes;

Ebbesworthie to the use of

a) Nicholas Tapson and Agnes until the date of the final instalment

If paid then

b) Nicholas Tapson and Agnes and their heirs

then c) the lawful heirs of Agnes in default of issue of Nicholas Tapson and Agnes

then d) the heirs of Alexander Ebbesworthie in default of issue of Agnes

In default of payment, to the use of Alexander Ebbesworthie and Katherine Ebbesworthie his daughter and their heirs;

Easter Bidlake to the use of

a) Alexander Ebbesworthie for life

If he dies before the date of the final instalment then

b) Nicholas Tapson and Agnes until the date of the final instalment

If paid then

c) Nicholas Tapson and Agnes and their heirs

then d) the lawful heirs of Agnes in default of issue of Nicholas Tapson and Agnes

then e) the heirs of Alexander Ebbesworthie in default of issue of Agnes

In default of payment, to the use of Alexander Ebbesworthie and Katherine Ebbesworthie his daughter and their heirs.

The indenture was signed by *Thomas Maddocke*, ..?.. *Stephens* and *Robert Tapson Jn*.

4.4 THE BUCKLAND MONACHORUM CONNECTION

The 1633/4 marriage settlement explains how Ebsworthy and the other properties came into the hands of the Tapson family. A search through the Buckland Monachorum baptisms (pages 4, 5) reveals that only one Nicholas Tapson was baptized in that parish, on 25 March 1604, the son of Robert Tapson. It will be observed that before 1664 women were not involved in childbirth and so, with the names of just the fathers in the baptismal register, family relationships can be assigned with less confidence; however, on the assumption that only one Robert Tapson was producing a family in Buckland Monachorum at that time, that family would have comprised:

Robert	baptized	12	Nov	1589
Temperance	baptized	5	Mar	1591/2
John	baptized	23	Aug	1594
Richard	baptized	19	Dec	1596
Joan	baptized	2	Jun	1599
Thomas	baptized	14	Dec	1601
Nicholas	baptized	25	Mar	1604
Helen	baptized	25	Jan	1606/7

Evidence will be produced later (page 113) which will support the assumption that these children were indeed siblings. [It was probably Robert's daughter Temperance who married Richard Foote at Buckland Monachorum on 4 June 1621, and his daughter Helen named in a Marriage Licence:*

13 Apr 1630 Thomas Riche & Ellin Tapson both of Buckland Monachorum.]

Nicholas was nearly ten years younger than his brother John named in the marriage settlement as a feoffee to uses. His eldest brother, Robert Tapson Junior, would have been nearly 26 years old when a Robert Tapson married Elizabeth Ashe at Buckland Monachorum on 9 October 1615 (page 2); the burial entry dated 6 March 1616/7 (page 6) for Robert Tapson, son of Robert, must refer to their first-born son and not to Robert Tapson Junior, who survived to sign the marriage settlement in 1633/4.• The £270 which Nicholas had to find, albeit by instalments, was a large sum of money by any standard; and since he was the fifth son it suggests that this branch of the Tapson family was quite prosperous. Both Nicholas and his brother John are described as yeomen, so the marriage was the union of two successful farming families, though of different social classes.

The Exeter wedding had been held on 21 February 1632/3 in the church, tucked away in a corner of the Cathedral Close, of St. Martin. Although it is small, St. Martin's was at that time regarded as a highly fashionable church, and without doubt the marriage was quite a social occasion, very *county*, with all the important gentryfolk arriving from the country in their coaches. We shall never know whether the Bidlakes were invited! The early registers of St. Martin's church were destroyed by bombing during World War II, but a transcript made by Nesbitt in 1926 has the entry:

21 Feb 1632 Nicholas Tapson and Agnis Elsworthy by licence

The two errors in the bride's name are not repeated in Mann's transcript of Exeter Marriage Licences:

15 Feb 1632 Nicholas Tapson of Buckland Monachorum and Agnes Ebsworthy of Briddestowe

Two further marriages involving the Ebsworthy family, which took place in 1636 and 1638, are of interest to us. The first is recorded in Nesbitt's transcript of the registers of St. Martin's:

9 Dec 1636 Peter Ebsworthy, Gent, and Katherine Ebsworthy

and in Mann's transcript of Exeter Marriage Licences:

8 Dec 1636 Peter Ebsworthie of Briddistowe, Junior, and Katherine Ebsworthie of same

The second of these marriages took place at Buckland Monachorum:

7 Aug 1638 Johannes Tapson and Katherina Ebsworthy

The Ebsworthy pedigree (page 105) gives Peter's age in 1620 as 12, so he would have been about 28 in 1636. Like that of Nicholas and Agnes, his marriage was by licence and it was celebrated at St. Martin's; so one is tempted to assume, on the ground that Alexander would have wished his second daughter to have had just as splendid a wedding as her elder sister, that it was Peter Ebsworthy

*J.L. VIVIAN: Index of Exeter Diocese Marriage Licences 1523-1632 Pub 1899
•See Appendix VI (Addenda) & Appendix VII (Further Addenda)

As already mentioned (page 12), two items of business dealt with at the Court of the Manor of Buckland Monachorum held on 27 November 1602 were concerned with a lease of land to a Robert Tapson and a further lease of land to three of his sons. The two items from the Court Roll (WDRO 70/29) are now quoted, but with the much-abbreviated Latin written out in full and with a translation provided:

Ad hanc curiam Robertus Tapson facit dicto domino manerii fidelitatem pro uno Tenemento in Freesebeare infra manerium predictum quod clamat pro termino lxx^ta Annorum si ipse Idem Robertus Margeria uxor ejus et Johanna Phillipp tam diu vixerint aut eorum alter tam diu vixerit virtute cujusdam Scripti Indentati inde facti per dictum dominum et modo predictus Robertus admissus est inde Tenens

[TRANSLATION To this court Robert Tapson makes to the said lord of the manor fealty for a tenement in Freesebeare within the manor aforesaid, which he claims for a term of seventy years if he himself the same Robert, Margery his wife, and Joan Phillipp shall so long live, or one of them shall so long live, by virtue of a certain indented deed thereupon made through the said lord; and now the aforesaid Robert is acknowledged thereby as tenant.]

Ad hanc curiam Robertus Tapson Junior facit dicto domino fidelitatem pro tribus Clausis terre apud Pownd infra etc [manerium predictum] *concessione per dictum dominum pro termino lxx^ta Annorum si Idem Robertus Johannes Tapson et Richardus Tapson tam diu vixerint aut eorum alter tam diu vixerit per Scriptum suum Indentatum gerendum dato xx^o die Novembris Anno Regni dicte domine Regine xliii^tio et admissus est inde Tenens*

[TRANSLATION To this court Robert Tapson Junior makes to the said lord fealty for three closes of land at Pownd within etc. [the aforesaid manor], as a grant by the said lord for a term of seventy years if the same Robert, John Tapson, and Richard Tapson shall so long live, or one of them shall so long live, through his indented deed, which he presents, dated 20 November in the 43rd year of the reign of the said Lady Queen; and is acknowledged thereby as tenant.]

The Buckland Monachorum parish registers list very few Robert Tapsons, so it seems certain that the first of these two items refers to Nicholas's father, negotiating a lease from the lord of the manor, William Crymes, arm. (page 80), of a tenement in Freesabeare, an estate on the high ground towards the north-east of Buckland Monachorum parish. A lease on three lives was quite normal, in this case to terminate after 70 years or on the death of the last of the three lives, Robert, Margery his wife, and Joan Phillipp. [*Fealty* was the solemn oath made to the lord of the manor of faithful service; it implied acceptance of the rules and customs of the manor.]

The second item must refer to Robert's three eldest sons, Robert Junior, John, and Richard, who would at the time have been 13, 8, and nearly 6 years of age, respectively. The grant of a lease to such young children was sought with the intent that the lease might thereby stand a better chance of running to its full term of seventy years. The reference to an indenture of 20 November in the 43rd year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth (20 November 1600) suggests that Robert Tapson Junior was re-negotiating a lease taken out two years before, which perhaps included his father as one of the lives. Pound was the estate adjoining and to the south of Freesabeare. Although Freesabeare was shown on the tithe map (about 1840) of the parish, it seems now no longer to exist as a separate farm; it has probably been incorporated into Pound, which is still an important estate.

The Buckland Monachorum parish registers record the burial of a Robert Tapson on 14 November 1637, very likely Robert Tapson Senior himself; his first child was born 48 years earlier, so he would have been in his seventies, or not far off, by 1637, and the next burial of a Robert Tapson in Buckland Monachorum did not take place for another 27 years. Robert's death in 1637 is confirmed by the absence of his name from the Protestation Oath of 1642 (page 19). We learn from the 1602 manor court roll that Robert's wife was named Margery; that the burial of a Robert Tapson on 14 November 1637 refers to Robert Tapson Senior of Freesabeare is therefore further confirmed by the burial on 1 March 1640/1 (page 7) of *Margeria Tapson vidua*.•

•See Appendix VI (Addenda) & Appendix VII (Further Addenda)

4.6 SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY LAY SUBSIDY ASSESSMENTS

As well as the four early lay subsidy assessments which survive fairly completely for Devonshire (pages 13-15) there also survive some Seventeenth-Century returns for various hundreds, including the hundreds of Lifton and Roborough.

The 1601 Subsidy The assessment (PRO E179/101/429) for the lay subsidy of 43rd Elizabeth has survived for Lifton and Roborough hundreds. For Bridestowe the entries include:

Petrus Ebsworthie	*Land*	*?*
Richardus Ebsworthie	*Land*	*?*
Paulus Ebsworthie	*Goods*	*£3*

and for Buckland Monachorum:

Richard Tapson	*Goods*	*£5*
Robert Tapson	*Goods*	*£5*
Thomas Tapson	*Goods*	*£3*

From the Ebsworthy pedigree (page 105) we know that Richard Ebsworthy was Alexander's father. We can also be fairly confident that Robert Tapson was Robert Tapson of Freesabeare, that Richard Tapson was the husband of Margaret (page 76), and that Thomas Tapson was either the husband or the father-in-law of Agnes (page 80).

The 1609-10 Subsidies. For both of these hundreds the assessment survives for the second of two payments of a single subsidy dated 7th James (PRO E179/101/452). For Bridestowe the assessment now includes Alexander instead of his father:

Petrus Ebsworthy gent	*Land*	*£5*
Alexander Ebsworthy	*Land*	*£2*
Pawlus Ebsworthy	*Goods*	*£4*

and for Buckland Monachorum there is no change of names:

Richard Tapson	*Goods*	*£5*
Robert Tapson	*Goods*	*£5*
Thomas Tapson	*Goods*	*£4*

The 1623-4 Subsidies The assessment for the third of three subsidies in three payments dating from 21st James (PRO E179/102/463) also survives for both Lifton and Roborough hundreds. In Bridestowe:

Petrus Ebsworthie gent	*Land*	*£4*
Alexander Ebsworthie	*Land*	*£1*
Paulus Ebsworthie	*Goods*	*£4*

and in Buckland Monachorum:

..... *Tapson*	*Goods*	*£5*
Robertus Tapson	*Goods*	*£5*
Margreta Tapson vid	*Goods*	*£3*
Willemus Tapson	*Goods*	*£3*

Again, Robert must have been Robert Tapson of Freesabeare, Margaret was by now the widow of Richard, and the first Tapson listed was probably the Thomas who paid tax in 1609-10. William was most probably *Guilielmus Tapson de Beare* who was buried on 4 March 1625/6 (page 6). Although William was not listed in either the 1601 or the 1609-10 assessment, a *John Topsham de Beare* had paid tax on goods valued at £3 (at a rate of 1s 8d in the pound) in the assessment (PRO E179/100/368) of 13th Elizabeth (1571) which survives for *North Bucklond*; *Johannes Tapson de Bere*, perhaps William's father, was buried on 17 April 1578.

The 1627-8 Subsidies Five subsidies in four payments date from 3rd Charles; the assessment for the fourth subsidy survives for Lifton and Roborough hundreds (PRO E179/102/479), but the Buckland Monachorum return is illegible. From *Briddestowe* are listed:

Peeter Ebswoorthy gent	*Land*	*£3*
Allixander Ebswoorthy	*Land*	*£2*
Pawll Ebswoorthy	*Goods*	*£4*

It is clear from these three asessments that Peter Ebsworthy held a considerable amount of land, for his assessments are much higher than Alexander's. Paul Ebsworthy also seems to have been quite prosperous, as do the Tapsons in Buckland Monachorum.

The 1640-1 Subsidies The assessments for the four subsidies in two payments dating from 16th Charles (the year before the Protestation Oath) survive for Roborough and Lifton hundreds. The assessment for the first two subsidies (PRO E179/102/486) lists no Tapson in Bridestowe, but now includes a William Ebsworthy:

Peter Ebsworthy gent	*Land*	*£2*
Alexander Ebsworthie	*Land*	*£2*
Paul Ebsworthie gent	*Goods*	*£4*
William Ebsworthie	*Goods*	*£3*

From Buckland Monachorum the return includes Thomas's widow Agnes (page 80):

William Tapson	*Land*	*£1*
John Tapson	*Goods*	*£3*
Agnes Tapson vid	*Goods*	*£3*
John Tapson	*Goods*	*£3*

The assessment for the third and fourth of these subsidies is illegible, but that for another two subsidies in one payment for the same year (PRO E179/245/11) records tax being paid by

Peter Ebsworthy gent	*Land*	*£2*
Alexander Ebsworthy	*Land*	*£1*
Paule Ebsworthy gent	*Goods*	*£4*
John Weekes & Nicholas Tapson	*Goods*	*£3*
William Ebsworthy	*Goods*	*£3*

in Bridestowe; in Buckland Monachorum the taxpayers in this assessment were

Agnes Tapson vid	*Land*	*£1*
John Tapson of Fresab^{r}	*Land*	*£1*
John Tapson of Beare	*Land*	*£1*

So Nicholas Tapson had moved to Bridestowe: the final instalment of the marriage settlement was due on 29 October 1641. But why he should be coupled with John Weekes is not clear. It is interesting that Nicholas also signed the Protestation Oath the following year (page 19). That John Tapson was now paying tax for Freesabeare land further supports the assumption that it was Robert Tapson Senior of Freesabeare who was buried in 1637 (page 113). John Tapson of Beare, who was probably the son of William, and John Tapson of Freesabeare both died in 1665 (page 7).

The 1663-4 Subsidies The latest of the lay subsidy assessments which survives for Lifton hundred (PRO E179/102/521), albeit in a poor condition, is not itself dated, but is listed by the Public Record Office as being the assessment for the first two of four subsidies which were granted in 15th Charles II. The entries for Bridestowe include

Alexander Ebsworthy & Nichol.....
William Ebsworthy & .....
..... & Peter Ebsworthy

The reference to *Nichol.....* is intriguing; unfortunately the parchment contains a large patch at this point on which no writing can be discerned, even under ultra-violet light; but it seems likely that it refers to Nicholas Tapson, who would then have been nearly 60 years old. Nicholas would have been dead before the start of the extant parish registers for Bridestowe in 1696 and there is no reference to his burial in any of the bishop's transcripts which have survived from before that date. However, the bishop's transcript of 1671 does record the burial, on 1 April 1671, of *Alexander Ebsworthie*; he was married on 28 January 1610 (page 108), so he would certainly have lived to become an octogenarian.

4.7 STAR CHAMBER SUIT: WITHECOMBE v ROB. & JOHN TAPSON ET ALIA

To the kinges most Excellente Maiestie

In moste humble voise Complayeninge sheweth unto your most excellent Maiestie your faithfull and obedient Subiect Christopher Withecombe of Stavistocke in the Countie of Devon Thatt whearas Robert Tapson of Buckland monacorum in the said Countie of Devon Yeoman and John Tapson of Buckland monacorum in the said County Yeoman, Richard Patie of Walkhampton in the said County Yeoman and Robert Peterfield of Buckland monacorum in the said County Yeoman being ioynte partnors and owners of certaine tinne in their possession in or about the moneth of October Anno domini 1600 the said partnors or some of them wear about to bargaine with one William Kerby of Tavystock in the said County of Devon for 3500 waight of tynne and in the Bargaine for the said tinne the said parties varyed only for the forbearinge of fyve pounds the partnors would have it paid present money upon the delevery of the wares with the rest of the present money. and the said William Kerby would have had day for that v^li untell the last payment of the rest of the somes of money that were to be paid after, Wherupon your Subiect Withecomb said or spake these words unto the said William Kerby Stand not upon this v^li to be foreborne for rather then this shall breake the bargaine. I will rather Lende you fyve poundes to finishe it, your being agreed and concluded upon all parts of the bargaine besides, Wherupon the said ioynte partnors Robert Tapson John Tapson Richard Patie Robert Peterfielde or on [one] *or some of them for himselfe for his other partnors in or about the xx^o day of October Anno domini 1600 did fully agree and conclude the bargaine with the said William Kerby for 3500 of white quoyned* [coined] *marchantable tynne for thirtie pounds the thousande to be paid half the mony dowen or present upon the delivery of the tinne for the other half to have respett untell the feast of S^t Andrewe then next followeinge For which Robert Tapson John Tapson Richard Paty Robert Peterfielde delivered the said .3500. of tinn and toke money for the half of it and for the other half did take William Kerbies bills for the payment therof at the dayes and times agreed upon. And the day appoynted beinge come the said William Kerby makeing default of payment. The said ioynt partnors Robert Tapson John Tapson Richard Patie Robert Peterfield distrusting the abillitie and sufficiency of the said William Kerby did maliciously and falsely Conspir imagine and devise together howe to recover the said debt of the said William Kerby or some part of it of your Subiect Christopher Withecombe. And therupon the said partnors agreed together upon this wicked plot. that twoe of them, Videlicet Richard Patie and Robert Peterfielde should bringe an accion of trespasse upon the Case* [an action for damages which are the result, not immediate but consequential, of an unlawful act] *against your subiect and suppose and alleadge that your subiect Christopher Withecombe did promise and undertake as suertie for the said William Kerby to performe the said agreement and that the other two partnors would be witnesses for it and so to assure them the partnors by this wicked plot and devise the said debt of William Kerby from your said subiect. and for effectinge of their falce malicious and wicked purpose did in or abouth the v^o day of November Anno domini 1600 in the Court of our Late Soveraigne Lady Queene Elizabeth of Stannery houlden at Tavistocke in the Countie of Devon befor John Sweet Steward and iudg of the said Court of Stanery in Tavistocke wher your said subiect Christopher Withecombe then and ther was attached by his Body Accordinge to the Custome of the said Court of Stanery. and delivered by suertishipe to answear to Richard Patie and Robert Peterfield in a plea of trespasse upon their Case and found(?) pledges de prosequendo* [an action to regain possession of goods] *and wherupon the said then plaintifs in the said Court by Roberte More their Attorney Complaine and sayen that whearas the v^o day of November in the xlij^o year of the Raigne of our Soveraigne Lady Elizabeth the Queenes maiestie Deceased here at Tavistock within the Iuridiction of the Courte one William Kerby of Tavistocke aforesaid Marchant was in price with the said plantifes to buy of them two thousande of white quoyned marchantable tinn the which the said plaintifes had Authoritie to sell and for that the said plaintifs did not know the sufficiency of the said William Kerby they stood in doubt to bargaine with him for the said tinn, The said Defendant the said v^o day of November the year and place abovesaid did not only encorage the said plaintifs to bargaine with the said William Kerby for the said tinn but also as suertie for the said William Kerby did assume promise and to and with the said plaintifs faithfully tooke upon him that all such moneys as was to be paid for the same at such dayes and times as it should be between them the*

said plaintiffs and the said Kerby agreed on. he the said defendant would well and truly content and pay unto them the said plaintifes yf the said William Kerby did not, the said plaintifs adhibitinge credit to the assumption and faithfull promise of the said defendant did fortwith therupon bargaine with the said William Kerby for the said 2000. of tinn at xxx^li the thowsande the on moetie wherof being xxx^li for on thousand of tinn to be paid upon the delivery of the said tinn. and the other moietie being other xxx^li to be paid at the feast day of St Andreu thapostell then next followinge And the said plaintifs sayen that they the said v^o day of November the year abovesaid at Tavistocke aforsaid did deliver unto the said William Kerby the said .2000. of Coyned tinn lacking but one pound according to their said bargaine and the said plaintifs further sayen that the said William Kerby at the said feast day of St Andrewe next ensewing the said v^o day of November did not pay unto the said plaintifs the said some of xxx^li acording to the said bargaine, The said defendant his said assumption and faithfull promise littell wayinge or regardinge but craftely and deceiptfully myndinge and intendinge to defraude and deceave the said plaintifs albeitt the said feast of St Andrew be past Yett the said some of xxx^li being the on moetie due for the said 2000. of tinn unto the said plaintifs hath not yelded ne paide. but the same to pay or otherwise sattisfie hath alwaies hitherto refused and denied and yet doth to the damadge of the said plaintifs of xl^li wherof they have brought their sute, Att which day cometh the said defendant by William Dodge his attorney and defendeth the wronge iniuries and damages when and where etc and by preface saith that the declaracon of the said plaintifs and also the matters therin contained are altogether insufficient in the Lawe the benifyt of the exceptions to the insufficiency thereof alwayes herafter saved for plea. Notwithstandinge the said defendant saith that he did not assume promise and to and with the said plaintifs faithfully take upon him in such mannor and forme as the said plaintiffs in their declaracon have alleadged and therupon putteth himself upon triall of the Cuntry(?) and the plaintiffs lykwise. and so therupon issue was taken and inioyned between the said plaintifs Richard paty and Robert peterfielde and the Defendant Christopher Withecombe and a Jury of xxiiij being impannelled and returned by the bayliff of the said Courte upon a precept of venire facias [a writ for summoning persons to serve on a jury] *or in the nature of a venire facias to that purpose directed whereof xj appeared and to supply the full nomber of xij a tales* [a writ for summoning persons to make up a deficiency in a jury] *was awarded according to the statute in that behalf made upon precept..according to the statute the baylife returned names of 4. of which 24 and 4 by the tales these persons followinge were .12. who did serve and trie the said Issue videlicet Richard Lampford gent. Edward Skerrel. William Gill. Thomas Willey. peter oxenham. John Edgcombe. Thomas Reddaclife. William Knight. John Hawkins. Richard Hawkins. William Hearde. John Sprey. After which Jury impannelled and befor apparens of the Jurors or any of them for triall of the saide Issue; the said plaintifs Richard patie and Robert peterfielde plotinge and Deviseinge how they might by some Corrupt and false testimony of wittnesses to be deposed at the triall of the said Issue, to periure and obtaine a false verdict against the defendant Withecombe upon the said plea That he the Defendant did not assume promise and to and with the said plaintifs faithfully take upon him in such manner and forme as the said plaintifs have alleadged and in execucion of their wicked plot and devise and to the intent the Jury should have callen to geve such verdict they the said plaintifs Richard patie and Robert peterfielde suborned* [induced to commit perjury] *divers wittnesses. Robert Tapson. John Tapson and pasco Atwell Corruptly for mony and Rewards or promises of money and rewards falsely to sweare and depose in evidence to the said Jury at the said Triall that all such moneyes as was to be paid for the same tinn at such dayes and times as it should be between them the said plaintifs meaneinge Richard patie and Robert peterfielde and the said William Kerby agreed one he the said Defendant meaninge the said Christopher Withecombe would well and truly content and pay unto the said plaintifs Richard patie and Robert peterfield yf the said William Kerby did not pay the same. Whearby the said Wittnesses comitted by the said subornacon corrupt and wilfull periury by reason of which subornacon a false oathe of the said Robert Tapson. John Tapson and pasco Atwell the said Iurors did appeare and being sworne and charged to the said Issue did give their verdict in the said cause for the plaintifs against the Defendant that the Defendant did promise and assume as in the declaracion is supposed, which triall was had in the said Courte of the Late Queens Maiestie of Stanerie in Stavistock befor John Sweet gent steward and Iudge of the said Courte of Staneries in or about the xx^o day of March in the xliij^o year of her Maiesties raigne by reason of the said false*

evidence geven and deposed thorowe bribes and rewardes geven or promised (The said Iury did geve their verdict: viz^{t}: that the Defendant Withecombe did promise and assume in such mannor and forme as the plaintifs hath declared and did asses xxx^{li} x^{s} for damiges. xiiij^{s} for Cost) Contrary to the Lawes and Statutes of this your highnes Realme by which false evidens of periury subornacions promises of bribes and rewards and pariuries your poore subiect hath bine imprisoned and have had losses and hinderances therby to the damadge of Fowre hundreth poundes And whearas your subiect being in peaceable and Lawfull possession of a howse and Lands in Tavistock and one howse called a stable adioyneinge unto the principall howse in the said County of Devon wherein your said subiect then dwelt Richard Russell of the said towne and County Peter Russell of the said towne and County Edmond Jackman and Mary his wyfe of the said towne and County and Thomas Soale of the said towne and County did in or about the xx^{o} day of Aprill last past being unlawfully assembled together in tavistocke aforesaid in the said County of Devon did very disorderedly Come unto your subiect his said howse in Tavistocke aforesaid and then and ther In Routous and Riotous mannor with bowes bills swords and staves with force and armes did unlawfully breake open and enter into the howse called the stable of your said subiect being fast locked in Tavistock aforesaid and did breake downe the doore of the said howse called the stable and did take and Carry away out of the said howse one gelding of your said subiect worth fyve poundes and then and ther did grieveously beate and wounde your subiects wyfe and servants in defending the said Riotous force Contrarie to the peace of our Soveraigne Lord the Kinge; In Consideracon wherof and for that the said practizes Confederacies periuries and subornacions of periuries Rowtes Riots and unlawfull assemblies and other misdemeanures bene all done sythence the last generall pardon by parliament and bine offences that deserve great and sever punishment. May it please your maiestie to grante your most gratious writs of Subpena to be directed to the said Richard Russell Peter Russell Edmund Jackman and Mary his wyfe Thomas Soale. Richard patie Robert peterfielde Pasco Atwell John Tapson Robert Tapson as severall offendors in mannor aforesaid Commanding them and every of them therby personally to appeare befor the Lords and others of your Maiesties mose honnorable privie Counsaile in your maiesties high Courte of starr Chamber at a certaine day and under a certaine paine therin by your highnes to be appoynted then and ther to answeare to the premises and further to abide such order and direction therin as the said Lords and others of your maiesties said Courte of Star Chamber shall set downe and appoynte and your subiect Christopher Withecombe shall dayly pray to god for your maiesties most Royall person Longe to Raigne over us

The Star Chamber, held in the old Palace of Westminster, consisted of both privy councillors and expert judges who, as well as administering justice directly, were also responsible for supervising other courts. Dating from 1485, and named after the star-spangled ceiling of the room in which it met, the Star Chamber sat without a jury and its hearings were public. The Star Chamber was respected until the reign of Charles I when its decisions were used to favour the causes of the King and the Anglican Church, an abuse which led to its abolition by the Long Parliament in 1641.

Procedure in the Star Chamber followed a similar pattern to that followed in the Court of Chancery (page 40). The Bill of Complaint which initiated this suit (PRO STAC8/292/26) is not dated, but it refers to Queen Elizabeth as *Deceased*, so it must postdate 24 March 1602/3. Only one Answer has survived; dated *9 February Anno 2 Jacobi Regio* [1604/5], it begins

The severall answeare of Edmond Jakeman one of the Defendants

and states that he is not guilty. The Robert Tapson named in the Bill of Complaint must have been Robert Tapson Senior of Freesabeare, since there is no evidence of any other Robert Tapson in Buckland Monachorum at the time of these events, except for Robert Tapson Junior who would have been only 10 years old when the tin was sold in October 1600. There were at that time, however, several John Tapsons in the parish, any one of whom might have been implicated.

The tin-mining and tin-smelting districts of Devon and Cornwall were known as the *Stannaries*. Stannary Courts, certainly in existence by 1337, were responsible for the administration of justice among the tinners who were, by ancient charter, exempt from all other jurisdiction except in cases affecting land, life or limb. Jurisdiction was transferred to the County Courts in 1896.

4.8 THE JOHN TAPSONS OF FREESABEARE

After the death in 1637 of Robert Tapson Senior it would seem that the lease of Freesabeare and Pound was taken over not by his eldest son, Robert, but by his second son, John, who was paying tax on Freesabeare in 1640-1 (page 115). This John would have been 71 years old on 10 September 1665 when *John Tapson of Freeesabeere* was buried at Buckland Monachorum (page 7). Moreover, after the burial of his infant son on 6 March 1616/7 (page 110), there is no further entry in the Buckland Monachorum register that could refer to Robert Tapson Junior, except possibly the burial on 9 December 1664 of *Robert Tapson of Sampford Spiney*, who may have been the *Robert Tapson of Buckland Monachorum* who married *Elizabeth Langsford of Samford Spiney* (page 85); however, this Robert could well have been the *Robertus filius Johannis Tapson* baptized on 18 February 1604/5 (page 90). So whilst it is just a possibility that some time after the burial of his son at Buckland Monachorum Robert Tapson Junior moved away, married Elizabeth Langsford (though no burial entry has so far come to light for his first wife, also named Elizabeth) and settled in Bratton Clovelly, perhaps making a final move to Sampford Spiney, there is no evidence whatsoever to justify such a hypothesis. Nevertheless, if it was Robert Tapson Junior who in the early 1630's was living in Bratton Clovelly, the parish immediately to the north of Bridestowe parish, we would have a possible explanation of how his brother Nicholas came to meet Agnes Ebsworthy, an acquaintanceship which was to lead to their marriage on 21 February 1632/3 (page 110).

Following the marriage (page 110) of *Johannes Tapson and Katherina Ebsworthy* on 7 August 1638 at Buckland Monachorum, the register of that parish records the baptisms (page 5):

16 Oct 1639 Johannes filius Johannis Tapson
14 Apr 1641 Margeria filia Johannis Tapson

and the burials (page 7):

11 Sep 1641 Margeria filia Johannis Tapson
13 Dec 1642 Infans Johannis Tapson [a child of John Tapson]
18 Jan 1643 Katherina Tapson uxor Johannis

John Tapson of Freesabeare would have been 44 at the time of the marriage, so perhaps ought to be discounted as the groom because of his age. However, the fact that a daughter was christened Margery, not a common name at the time in the Tapson family but the name of John's mother, who had died six weeks earlier, leads one to suspect that he may indeed have been the bridegroom. He had been a feoffee to uses in the 1633/4 marriage settlement, so he would surely have met Agnes's sister Katherine (if the bride was, as seems likely, Alexander Ebsworthy's younger daughter) and her £220 marriage portion, paid by Nicholas, would have been quite an inducement to a marriage which would keep the money in the family. Further evidence will be adduced later (page 122) in support of this theory.•

When John's wife, Katherine, died on 18 January 1643/4, their only surviving child, John, would have been 4 years old. Just over three years later, on 29 May 1647, the marriage was recorded at Buckland Monachorum (page 2) of *Johannes Tapson & Agnes Palmer*. It seems possible that the groom was again John Tapson of Freesabeare, then aged nearly 53 but obviously needing someone to care for his young son. This marriage was soon followed by the baptisms (page 5):

15 Apr 1648 Elizabetha filia Johannis Tapson
23 Apr 1651 Robertus filius Johannis Tapson

It was probably the son of John and Katherine, John II as it will be convenient to label him, who is mentioned in an indenture (WDRO 70/119a) which refers to *Fresibeere*. This document is a Lease, dated 20 November 1683, between the lord of the manor, Elize Crymes, Esq., and Joseph Drake, Esq., stating that Elize Crymes, in consideration of 5 shillings, sells to Joseph Drake for one year *All that the Lordshipp and mannor of Buckland alias Buckland Monachorum alias Buckland Crymes*. This document was clearly part of a Lease and Release in which Joseph Drake was a feoffee to uses. [The armigerous Crymes family (page 80) had long been lords of the manor of Buckland Monachorum.] The indenture lists the lands, houses and occupants of the manor of Buckland Monachorum to include (line 40):

•This John was probably one of the signatories of the Protestation Oath at Buckland Monachorum in 1642 (page 19).

..... all that messuage and Tenement called Fresibeere and also all those three closes of land and pasture with the appurtenances called Pound within the said parish of Buckland monachorum and late in the tenure or possession of John Tapson and now in the tenure or possession of Elizabeth Tapson widdow her assignee or assignes and all houses orchards gardens lands meadows pastures feedings profitts and comodities to the saide last mentioned messuage and tenement belonging or in any wise appertaining with the appurtenances .....

Because the lease of Freesabeare and the three closes of land at Pound had passed to him, the John named in this indenture must have been the son of Nicholas's brother John Tapson of Freesabeare, John I; this fact lends considerable weight to the argument that it was John Tapson of Freesabeare who married Katherine Ebsworthy, for John II, born the year after that marriage, was the only John, son of John, to have been baptized in Buckland Monachorum between 1603 and 1670. And John II would have been 27 by 16 October 1666 (the year after the death of John I) when the Buckland Monachorum register records the marriage (page 2) of John Tapson to Elizabeth Parnell, who is therefore likely to have been the *Elizabeth Tapson widdow* of this 1683 indenture.

The implication must then be that it was this John, John II, who was buried, at the age of 40 years, on 5 May 1680 (page 7) within two weeks of the baptism of his youngest child, Margaret; in which case Elizabeth would have been a widow for 3½ years by the time of the 1683 document. The baptisms of ten children of John II and Elizabeth are recorded in the Buckland Monachorum register (page 5), five of whom did not survive childhood; there must have been an eleventh child, the second to be named Hester, and her burial too is recorded (page 7), probably before she had received formal baptism. *Robert Tapson the Sonne of John Tapson of Buckland monachorum Lately deceased*, a beneficiary named in the will of Robert Tapson of Calstock (page 84) dated 1 February 1680/1, just nine months after the death of John II, was without doubt the youngest son of John II and Elizabeth. This suggests a close relationship between the testator and the Tapsons of Freesabeare.•

That the Tapsons were not lessees of the whole of the Freesabeare estate is made clear by four further entries in the 1683 indenture:

..... part and parcell of a tenement called Fresibeere now in the tenure of Ferdinando Crymes, Gent. .....

..... Towne place at Fresibeere in the possession of Henry Caron .....

..... all those lands tenements and hereditaments in or called Fresibeere now or late in the tenure or possession of Nicholas Spry yeoman .....

..... yearly rent of two shillings and six-pence issueing out of certain lands or tenements in or called Fresibere payable by Agnes Foote .....

John III, the eldest son of John II and Elizabeth, would have been only 9 years old when his father died in 1680, and this is probably why, 3½ years later at the time of the 1683 indenture, the tenure of Freesabeare was still in the name of his mother, who may have remarried (page 2) on 22 January 1683/4. However, John III must surely be the John Tapson mentioned in a manor of Buckland Monachorum document (WDRO 70/104) headed *Rental Survey 1697* which contains the entry:

Fresabir & pound Jn° Tapson

1 life, 21 years, £27 yearly value, worth £108 to be sold, rent p.a. 14s 10d

so it would seem that the Tapsons had yet again extended their lease on these properties. John III would have been about 27 years old at the time of this rental survey.

Another document (WDRO 70/103) labelled *The Yearly Value of the Mannor of Buckland Monachorum & of the Estates* is not dated but is assumed to be of the late Seventeenth Century; it includes the item:

Fersaber & pound Jn° Tapson £28 value per annum

The increased annual value suggests that it may be the later of the two surveys; this is the highest value of all the properties listed, the next highest being £22.

•It was probably John II who paid Hearth Tax at Buckland Monachorum in 1674 (page 20).

About the time of this rental document the baptismal entry:

5 Dec 1699 Mary dau of John Tapson & Catherine

is recorded in the Buckland Monachorum register (page 5). It seems likely that Mary was the daughter of the most recent tenant of Freesabeare and Pound, John III, then aged 29, for there was no other John of the right age left in Buckland Monachorum, the *John son of Richard Tapson & Johan* baptized on 15 May 1664 having been buried three days later. Mary's baptismal entry was the last mention of a Tapson in the Buckland Monachorum register until some one and a half centuries later.

On the same day that Mary was baptized at Buckland Monachorum a baptismal entry was made in the register of the Tavistock Presbyterian Abbey Chapel:

5 Dec 1699 Mary dau of John & Katherine Tapson

It would be too much of a coincidence to assume that another John and Catherine Tapson (the spelling of the mother's name merely reflects the minister's preference) had a daughter christened Mary just four miles away on the same day. The facetious explanation is that John III and Catherine were uncertain as to which denomination offered true salvation and so decided to hedge their bets by arranging for their daughter to be baptized into each, having their pony and trap waiting for them so that after Mary's first baptism they could make a dash to arrive in time for her second: a busy Tuesday. However, the correct exlanation is probably to be found in the fact that between 1694 and 1706 Church of England incumbents were required to register the births (though not the baptisms) of children of dissenters in their parishes, though in this case a second baptism seems to have been performed.

Two children of John and Katherine had already been baptized at the Abbey Chapel, but it is not known at which Anglican church their births were registered; and after Mary's baptism two more were baptized at the Abbey Chapel:

18 Aug 1696	*John*	*son of John & Katherine Tapson*
14 Aug 1698	*Elizabeth*	*dau of John & Katherine Tapson*
5 Dec 1699	*Mary*	*dau of John & Katherine Tapson*
20 Jan 1702	*William*	*son of John & Katherine Tapson*
23 Nov 1703	*James*	*son of John & Katherine Tapson*

The 20 Jan 1702 date is given according to the Gregorian calendar; the minister, as sometimes happened, had anticipated the changeover from the Julian calendar which was not to take place officially in England until 1752 (page 8). John III would have been nearly 26 when his first child was baptized.

These baptisms seem to be the earliest evidence of the involvement of members of the Tapson family with dissenting denominations. The address of John and Katherine is not given in the Presbyterian register, so it is unclear when they left Freesabeare, for they may have continued for some time to make trips to chapel in Tavistock from Buckland Monachorum; from the evidence of the registers they were the last Tapsons to leave the parish which had been the family home for some centuries. It may have been this John who later appeared in Black Torrington (page 351).

A further entry in the register of the Tavistock Abbey Chapel reads:

22 Dec 1700 Elizabeth dau of Robert & Elizabeth Tapson

It is likely that Robert was the only surviving brother, then aged 24, of John III. Robert and Elizabeth seem then to have moved to Plymouth, for the register of Plymouth Norley Street Presbyterian Chapel lists the baptisms:

4 Jul 1705	*Mary*	*dau of Robert & Elizabeth Tapson*
24 Nov 1719	*Cornelius*	*son of Robert & Elizabeth Tapson*
19 Aug 1721	*Martha*	*dau of Robert & Elizabeth Tapson.*

Curiously, another baptism is registered at Plymouth Batter Street Presbyterian Chapel:

11 Jul 1705 Mary dau of Robert & Elizabeth Tapson

It seems that Robert and Elizabeth too had their daughter Mary baptized twice, but this time both baptisms were in Presbyterian chapels, a week apart on successive Wednesdays; the reason for this is not at all clear.•

•See Appendix VI (Addenda).

4.9 THOMAS TAPSON OF BICKLEIGH

Sir Shilston Calmadie, Knight, Andrewe Pomeroy, Esq., William Maynard, Gent., and John Browne, yeoman, in an indenture (WDRO 372/26/3/16) dated 11 April, 20th James (1622), leased to Thomas Tapson of Buckland Monachorum, yeoman, and William Toupe of Plymstock, yeoman, for £60 annual rent, the estate known as Hele in the parish of Bickleigh. Bickleigh is the next parish to the south of Buckland Monachorum parish, and Hele is just north of Bickleigh village.

The only baptisms of a Thomas Tapson in the Buckland Monachorum parish register prior to the date of this indenture are:

10	Apr	1556	son of John
13	Sep	1567	son of (?)Thomas (page 82)
2	Feb	1597/8	son of Thomas, who was in St. Budeaux by February 1623/4 (page 82)
3	Sep	1600	son of Richard, who was (probably) in La Rochelle before 1624 (page 74)
14	Dec	1601	son of Robert

so it seems quite likely that the Thomas Tapson taking out the lease was Nicholas's brother, then aged 20 years. It is possible that the baptisms at Buckland Monachorum of Philip on 24 February 1621/2 and of John on 14 January 1626/7 may have been of his children, and the burial of a Thomas Tapson on 10 July 1671 may have been his own; if so, he would have been 69 years old when he died. Thomas did not sign the Protestation Oath in 1642 (page 19).

A Thomas Tapson is also mentioned in the indenture (page 121) of 1683 (line 70):

> ..... *and in all such lands in Bickham Higher Bickham and Lower Bickhams or in either of them as late were in the tenure and occupacon of John Edgecumbe Thomas Tapson Richard Reape and William Hiddy their assignee or assignes* .....

but we would probably not be justified in assuming that the Thomas mentioned in this indenture was Nicholas's brother. [Agnes, the mother of Thomas Tapson of St. Budeaux, had once farmed land at Bickham (page 80).]

4.10 THE DESCENDANTS OF PETER EBSWORTHY

The Protestation Oath return of 1642 (page 18) for Bridestowe contains the names of several members of the Ebsworthy family:

Alexander Ebsworthie
Paul Ebsworthie, gent
Peter Ebsworthie senior, gent
Peter Ebsworthie junior, gent
Peter Ebsworthie of Ebsworthie Town
Richard Ebsworthie
William Ebsworthie (Constable)

These names may be compared with the names shown on the Ebsworthy pedigree of 1620 (page 105): both Alexander and (one assumes) his father, Richard, signed the Oath, as did the three generations of Peter Ebsworthys, but only one Paul Ebsworthy is listed. William Ebsworthy does not appear on the 1620 pedigree, but he paid tax in the 1640-1 and in the 1663-4 lay subsidies (page115); a William was also assessed for 5 hearths in the 1674 hearth tax (page 20).

These returns list no Ebsworthys in Cornwall, but in Devonshire eleven appear in Lifton hundred (which includes Bridestowe), one in Black Torrington hundred (immediately north of Lifton hundred), one in Tavistock hundred (immediately south of Lifton hundred) and one in Stanborough hundred (south-east of Dartmoor). [There was also a concentration of Ebsworthys during the Sixteenth Century in Shobrooke parish (23 miles north-east of Bridestowe, just to the north of Exeter); it is probable, but not certain, that they were a branch of the Ebsworthys of Ebsworthy.]

A list of freeholders within the parish of Bridestowe (DRO 189M Add01/7) compiled by William Bidlake in the Seventeenth Century refers to land held by the Ebsworthys in Bridestowe, for it includes the entries:

Alexander Ebsworthie houldeth his landes of the mannor of Cobham Weeke
Peter Ebsworthie houldeth Sprighill of the mannor of Cobham Weeke

Cobham Weeke was the main manor within the parish of Bridestowe. [Manors and parishes were not usually geographically identical; some parishes were divided into several manors whilst other manors embraced several parishes or overlapped parishes.]

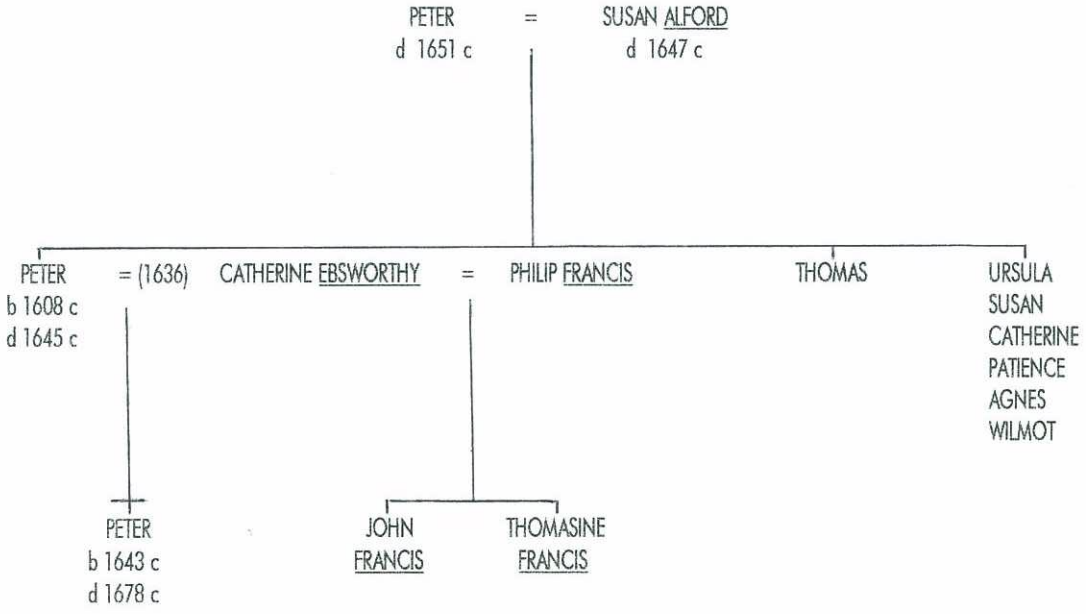
In 1636 Peter Ebsworthy, who was aged 12 in 1620, married Catherine Ebsworthy, probably a daughter of Paul Ebsworthy (page 110). This Peter made his will on 8 December 1645 (PRO PROB11/196 Fo.56); an abstract is given:

The Will of Peter Ebsworthy dated 8 December 1645 (Abstract)

Will of Peeter Ebsworthy of Bridestow Junior, Gent, Sick of body
To my wife Catherine all my goods and chattels
To my wife for life all my lands in Bridestow, Okehampton, Lydford and elsewhere
Then to my son Peeter Ebsworthy and his heirs for ever
Then, if my wife be with child or children, to them and their heirs,
if not, to Sir Shilston Calmady Kt. and his son Josias Calmady Esqr. and
likewise to Shilston Calmady and Francis Calmady Gent and their heirs
My wife to be my executor

The will was proved on 23 May 1646 at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury by Catherine Ebsworthy. From the will we learn that Peter and Catherine had a son, Peter; it was this Peter who, through his mother and her second husband Phillip Francis, brought the 1652 suit in Chancery (page 111). The beginning of the Bill of Complaint against Agnes and Wilmot Ebsworthy, aunts of Peter the orator, is given on the next page but, since it refers to three Peter Ebsworthys, punctuation is provided in order to make it more easily understandable; and the following branch of the Ebsworthy family tree may also be helpful:

The Descendants of Peter Ebsworthy the Grandfather



Your Orator Peter Ebsworthy, an infant of the age of nine years, by Phillip Francis of Plymouth, marchant, and Katheryne his wife, mother of the said Peter, his Gaurdian, humbley shew that whereas Peter Ebsworthy, grandfather of your Orator Peter, and Susan his wife were heretofore seized of several estates of inheritance in Fee of and in diverse manors and parishes in Briddestowe and elsewhere in the County of Devon and in several other counties. They had issue Peter Ebsworthy, father of your Orator Peter, their son and heir who afterwards married your Oratrix Katheryne, by and with whom he had a great Estate and portion in marriage as well in money as otherwise. In consideration whereof he the said Peter, late husband of your said Oratrix, and the said Peter and Susan, his father and mother, did convey and settle diverse lands and tenements to or for the use of your Oratrix as for her maintenance in case she should overlive the said Peter her husband who, having issue by your said Oratrix, your Orator Peter Ebsworthy his son and heir and only child, about 7 or 8 years since died. And near the same time or shortly after Susan died, upon whose death, although all the lands etc. of the said Susan did descend and ought to come to your Orator Peter Ebsworthy as cosen grandchild and next heir of the said Susan, that is to say, son and heir of Peter Ebsworthy who was son and heir of the said Susan, And likewise all the lands whereof the said Peter the father was seized did upon his death likewise descend or ought to come unto your Orator Peter, yet the said Peter Ebsworthy the grandfather, who lived many years after the deaths of Susan his wife and Peter his son, in all that time kept possession not only of his own estate, which he had settled and conveyed so as it should after his death come to his son Peter and his heirs, But likewise of all the lands etc. of Susan his wife and Peter his son, father of your Orator Peter, and took all the profits thereof during his life. And he kept all the deeds etc. not only of his own estates but also those of Susan his wife and Peter his son and also those that concerned your Oratrix. And about half a year since the said Ebsworthy, grandfather, also died, possessed of his estates, his wife's and his son's and also goods and money of great value, deeds, etc., all of which ought to have come to your Orator Peter Ebsworthy or to your Orators on Peter's behalf who ought to have received everything. If in truth he died intestate as is now given out and affirmed by Agnes Ebsworthy and Wilmot Ebsworthy, his daughters and Aunts of the Orator Peter Ebsworthy, who has been informed and does believe that his grandfather made a will and thereby disposed of his estate and made your said Oratrix sole executor thereof, which his said Aunts doe conceal and keep from him and his knowledge, and pretend title for themselves to the estate by some other means. Agnes and Wilmot, who lived in house with their said father in his lifetime and at the time of his death and whom he in his old age and infirmity entrusted with the custody of and care of his goods, bonds, bills, concerning the aforesaid manors and his goods, chattles, etc. and personal estate and last will and testament, for safe keeping and upon trust only, to account for it upon his death to whom it rightly belonged. But Agnes and Wilmot decided to deceive your Orator .....

It is in their Answer to this Bill of Complaint that Agnes and Wilmot state that their brother's wife was the daughter of Paul Ebsworthy (page 111); however, they might have been mistaken, since they were quite young at the time of the marriage. The administration of the estate of Peter Ebsworthy, the grandfather, was granted on 28 September 1653 (PRO PROB6/30 Fo. 32) by the Prerogative Court of Canterbury:

Administration of the estate of Peeter Ebsworthy of Briddlestowe was granted to his daughters Agnes Ebsworthie and Wilmot Ebsworthie.

Peter the Orator in the Chancery suit did not marry; administration of his estate was granted on 21 January 1678/9 by the Prerogative Court of Canterbury (PRO PROB6/54 Fo. 10) to his half-brother and half-sister, the children of his mother and her second husband Phillip Francis:

Administration of the estate of Peter Ebsworthy late of Oporto in the Kingdom of Portugal Bachelor deceased was granted to John Francis Ebsworthy and Thomasine Woolcombe wife of John Woolcombe brother and sister on the mothers side of the deceased

John Francis Ebsworthy should of course be *John Francis*.

CHAPTER 5

THE TAPSONS OF BRIDESTOWE

5.1 THE BRIDESTOWE PARISH REGISTERS

Like Buckland Monachorum, Bridestowe is flanked on the east by the barren wastes of Dartmoor, with its granite-crowned tors and vast bogs; but Bridestowe lies close to the north-western boundary of the moor, whereas Buckland Monachorum is thirteen miles south on its south-western slopes. In the Domesday Book of 1086 the parish is called *Bridestou* (page 104); the name underwent various changes, but by 1391 in the Episcopal Registers of the Diocese of Exeter it was spelt *Briddestowe*, which is more in line with the way it is still pronounced — as three syllables.

Some six miles north-east of Bridestowe is its nearest market town, Okehampton, situated on the northern edge of Dartmoor; this market town must have played an important rôle in the lives of the Bridestowe Tapsons. The ancient castle was held in 1086 by Baldwin the sheriff, a relative of the Conqueror (page 104); it later came into the hands of the Courtenay family, with whom it remained until the time of Henry VIII when the then Courtenay, Marquis of Exeter, was beheaded and the castle allowed to fall into ruin. The present remains date from the Norman period to the Fifteenth Century.

Bridestowe means *The Holy Place of St. Brigid* (or *Bridget*), the Irish saint to whom the church is dedicated; the present church was built about 1450, but it stands on the site of at least two earlier churches. The existing parish registers date from 1696, and entries from them relating to the Tapson family are now listed; baptisms, however, instead of being presented in chronological order, are grouped into families under the names of the parents as given in the baptismal entries. For subsequent ease of identification a reference number is attached to the name of each child baptized and a reference letter to each family. *Full* in the later marriage entries means *of full age*. [The section of this book in which an entry is discussed is indicated by a section reference number alongside that entry.]

Bridestowe Marriages from 1696 to 1900

21 Aug 1721 ***Robert Tapson*** & ***Orange Bolt*** *by banns* 5.14

11 Oct 1727 ***John Hockaday*** & ***Anne Tapson*** *by banns* 5.14

29 Sep 1731 ***William Coombe*** & ***Anne Tapson*** *by banns* 5.2

28 Nov 1746 ***William Tapson*** & ***Susanna Redecliff*** *by banns* 5.14

9 Feb 1773 ***George Ball*** & ***Mary Tapson*** *both sojourners of this parish by banns in the presence of John Tapson & Elizabeth Tapson* 5.8

23 Nov 1778 ***Ebsworthy Tapson*** & ***Ann Tapson*** *both of this parish by banns in the presence of Richard Maddaford & Michael Walter* 5.3

12 Apr 1779 ***William Ball*** *sojourner of this parish &* ***Dianisha Tapson*** *of Bridistow by banns in the presence of John Tapson & Michael Walter* 5.8

17 Jul 1781 ***Robert Tapson*** & ***Jane Keen*** *both of this parish by banns in the presence of Richard Maddaford & John Tapson* 5.13

24 Feb 1789 ***Edward Bickle*** *widower of Bratton &* ***Elizabeth Tapson*** *spinster of this parish by banns in the presence of John Tapson & James Coombe* 5.14

31 Dec 1806 ***Thomas Palmer*** *of Okehampton yeoman & bachelor &* ***Mary Tapson*** *of this parish by licence in the presence of W^m^ Tapson & Richard Ball* 5.10

6 Jun 1808 ***William Brock*** *of The Holy Trinity, Exeter, &* ***Grace Tapson*** *of this parish by banns in the presence of W^m^ Tapson & Joseph Ball* 5.10

20 Feb 1810 ***Nicholas Tapson*** & ***Mary Coombe*** *both of this parish by banns in the presence of W^m^ Coombe & W^m^ Tapson* 5.5

12 Oct 1819 ***Thomas Tapson*** *of this parish &* ***Jane Walkey*** *sojourner of this parish by banns in the presence of John White & W^m^ Tapson* 8.10

21 Sep 1831 ***Jacob Gerry*** *of this parish &* ***Mary Tapson*** *of this parish by banns in the presence of W^m^ Coombe & Nicholas Tapson* 5.9

26 Oct 1836• ***John Worden*** *of this parish &* ***Susanna Tapson*** *of this parish by banns in the presence of Thomas Worden & Samuel Youlden*

8 Oct 1840 ***Roger Northcott*** *Full Bachelor Yeoman Thrushelton (Father: William Northcott, Yeoman)*
Anne Tapson *Full Spinster Servant Bridestowe (Father: William Tapson, Butcher)*
by banns in the presence of John Rundle & William Yelland 5.10

9 Oct 1842 ***James Rockey*** *Full Bachelor Carpenter Sourton (Father: James Rockey, Carpenter)*
Anne Tapson *Full Spinster Bridestowe (Father: Nicholas Tapson, Labourer)*
by banns in the presence of Samuel Youlsdon & Jacob Gerry 5.5

4 Oct 1847 ***John Turner*** *Full Bachelor Waggoner Bridestowe (Father: Samuel Turner, Labourer)*
Jane Tapson *Full Spinster Servant Bridestowe (Father: Thomas Tapson, Farmer)*
by banns in the presence of William Blatchford & Robert Jackman 9.1

•See Addenda Page 382 (reference to p 148).

(Family H)	2	Feb	1779	*Nicholas (48)*	***Ebsworthy Tapson & Ann***	*5.4*
	28	Nov	1780	*Mary Burnaford (49)*		
	16	Aug	1783	*Ebsworthy (50)*		
	10	Oct	1785	*John (51)*		
	22	Jul	1787	*Dionysia (52)*		
	5	Nov	1788	*Anne (53)*		
	31	Oct	1790	*Robert (54)*		
	13	Feb	1792	*Dionysia (55)*		
	6	Jul	1794	*Jenny (56)*		
(Family I)	12	Sep	1779	*John (57)*	***Elizabeth Tapson*** *Base Child*	*5.14*
(Family J)	19	Mar	1783	*Thomas (58)*	***Nicholas Tapson & Patience***	*8.1*
(Family K)	16	Sep	1784	*Mary (59)*	***William Tapson & Grace***	*5.10*
	31	Dec	1786	*Grace (60)*		
	26	Dec	1791	*William (61)*		
	25	Nov	1794	*Anne (62)*		
	14	Dec	1796	*Thomas Rice (63)*		
	14	May	1799	*John (64)*		
	13	Nov	1801	*Robert (65)*		
	26	Jan	1803	*Ebsworthy (66)*		
	4	Mar	1806	*Joseph (67)*		
(Family L)	16	Oct	1785	*Jenny (68)*	***Robert Tapson & Jenny***	*5.13*
(Family M)	12	Apr	1792	*Maria (69)*	***George Tapson & Mary***	*5.9*
	12	Apr	1792	*John (70)*		
	23	Sep	1793	*Thomas (71)*		
	21	Dec	1795	*William (72)*		
	28	Jun	1801	*Anne (73)*		
	20	Mar	1803	*Joseph (74)*		
(Family N)	23	Dec	1810	*Mary (75)*	***Nicholas Tapson, labourer, & Mary***	*5.5*
	11	Oct	1812	*Ebsworthy (76)*		
	29	Jan	1815	*William (77)*		
	12	Oct	1817	*John (78)*		
	18	Jul	1819	*Elizabeth (79)*		
	11	Sep	1820	*Samuel (80)*		
	20	Jul	1823	*Anne (81)*		
	3	Sep	1826	*John (82)*		
	13	Mar	1830	*Robert (83)*		
	15	Apr	1833	*Dionysia (84)*		
(Family O)	3	Feb	1820	*William (85)*	***William Tapson, schoolmaster,***	*5.11*
	30	Jan	1822	*Elizabeth Wonnacott (86)*	***& Elizabeth Hol***	
	18	Jan	1824	*Caroline (87)*		
(Family P)	7	Nov	1822	*Jane (88)*	***James Tapson, labourer, & Elizabeth***	*10.9*
	30	Oct	1825	*Priscilla (89)*		
(Family Q)	11	Feb	1838	*Mary (90)*	***Ebsworthy Tapson, labourer, & Mary***	*5.6*
	23	Oct	1842	*Anne (91)*		
	6	Mar	1845	*Fanny (92)*		
	20	Aug	1848	*Susan (93)*		
	6	Oct	1850	*Ellen Jane (94)*		
	20	Feb	1853	*Susan (95)*		

Bridestowe Burials from 1696 to 1900

7	Jun	1698	Ann Tapson	Affidavit received 14 June	
5	Jan	1706	Ebsworthy Tapson	Affidavit received 6 January	5.2
23	Feb	1707	Ebsworthy Tapson	Affidavit received 27 February	5.15
5	May	1710	Mrs Catherine Tapson	Affidavit received 6 May	5.15
15	Mar	1715	Robert Tapson	Affidavit received 16 March	5.14
19	Jul	1734	Anne Tapson	Affidavit received 19 July	?5.14
4	Aug	1735	Ebsworthy, the son of Nicholas Tapson		5.2
23	Jan	1736	Anne Tapson		?5.14
18	Sep	1737	Anne, the daughter of Ebsworthy Tapson		5.3
31	Jan	1737	Nicholas Tapson of Ebsworthy Town		5.2
4	Feb	1738	Ebsworthy, the son of Ebsworthy Tapson		5.3
18	Nov	1740	Robert Tapson		5.2
12	Apr	1743	Catharine Tapson		
9	Sep	1744	Catharine Tapson		
20	Oct	1746	Elizabeth, the daughter of Ebsworthy Tapson		5.3
19	Feb	1749	Nicholas, the son of Ebsworthy Tapson		5.3
27	Apr	1750	Nicholas, the son of Ebsworthy Tapson		5.3
15	Nov	1750	Nicholas Tapson		5.2
13	Jul	1754	John, the son of Ebsworthy Tapson		5.3
9	May	1759	Mrs Anne Tapson		5.2
9	Nov	1759	William, the son of William Tapson		5.14
20	Mar	1764	Orange Tapson		5.14
16	Jul	1765	William, the son of William Tapson		5.14
9	Aug	1765	George, the son of John Tapson		5.8
2	Jul	1767	Susanna Tapson		5.14
11	May	1773	Mary Tapson		
13	Apr	1779	Margaret Tapson		5.7
1	Jun	1782	Dinisha Tapson		5.3
26	Oct	1783	Robert Tapson, aged 84		5.14
1	Mar	1784	Henry Tapson, aged 57		5.2
11	Apr	1784	Nicholas Tapson, aged 54		5.7
16	Jun	1784	Ebsworthy Tapson, aged 70		5.3
21	Dec	1784	George Tapson, aged 5		8.1
20	Jan	1786	William Tapson, aged 61		5.14

5	*Oct*	*1786*	*Jenny Tapson, infant*	*5.13*
9	*May*	*1789*	*William Tapson, infant*	*5.13*
7	*Sep*	*1790*	*John Tapson, infant*	*5.13*
21	*Nov*	*1790*	*George Tapson, nine months*	*8.1*
25	*Jul*	*1791*	*Robert Tapson, infant*	*5.4*
1	*Jan*	*1793*	*Anne Tapson, aged 67*	*5.8*
12	*Mar*	*1799*	*Elizabeth Tapson, infant*	*8.1*
10	*Dec*	*1799*	*Thomas Tapson, aged 17*	*8.1*
15	*Nov*	*1801*	*Robert Tapson, infant*	*5.10*
10	*Apr*	*1805*	*John Tapson, aged 76*	*5.8*
8	*May*	*1811*	*William Tapson, aged 50*	*5.10*
27	*Nov*	*1811*	*Mary Tapson, aged 23*	*8.1*
9	*Feb*	*1817*	*William Tapson of Bridestowe, aged 2*	*5.5*
6	*Nov*	*1817*	*Maria Tapson of Lidford, aged 26*	*5.9*
25	*Jul*	*1818*	*John Tapson of Bridestowe, 11 months*	*5.5*
15	*Aug*	*1819*	*Elizabeth Tapson of Bridestowe, infant*	*5.5*
25	*Aug*	*1822*	*Grace Tapson of Bridestowe, aged 59*	*5.10*
12	*Apr*	*1825*	*William Tapson of Bridestowe, aged 33*	*5.11*
23	*Jun*	*1832*	*Jane Tapson of St Germans, aged 76*	*5.13*
4	*Jan*	*1833*	*Nicholas Tapson of Bridestowe, aged 53*	*5.5*
23	*May*	*1834*	*Dionysia Tapson of Bridestowe, aged 1*	*5.5*
20	*Apr*	*1842*	*George Tapson of Brentor, aged 75*	*5.9*
24	*Jan*	*1849*	*Mary Tapson of Coryton, aged 82*	*5.9*
16	*Apr*	*1849*	*Susan Tapson, village, aged 8 months*	*5.6*
10	*May*	*1850*	*Fanny Tapson, village, aged 5*	*5.6*

The date of receipt by the rector of Bridestowe of an Affidavit refers to the requirement of the Parliamentary Acts of 1666 and 1678, designed to encourage the wool trade, that bodies be buried wrapped only in wool. A relative had to swear an affidavit to the minister or to a justice within eight days of the funeral, confirming compliance with the law. The following was written into one of the Bridestowe registers by the rector of the time:

> *Form of an Affidavit to be made to the minister of every Parish at the Death of every Parishioner*
>
> > *I [A.B.] do swear that the body of [C.D.] was wrapped up in Sheep's Wool and nothing else — as directed by Act of parliment so help me God.*

It will be observed that after the burial in 1734 of Anne Tapson no further mention was made of an affidavit, though the Act was not formally repealed until 1814.

Reference may be made to the Bridestowe branch of the family tree (page 162), onto which the exact age of death for each person has been entered whenever possible (calculated on the assumption that baptism took place within a few weeks of birth).

5.2 NICHOLAS TAPSON OF BRIDESTOWE, YEOMAN

The entry in Mann's transcript of Exeter Marriage Licences, dated 23(?) June 1703:

***Nicholas Tapson** of Bridestowe, yeoman, & **Ann Gould** of Okehampton, spinster*

must refer to the parents of family B (page 130); they were married at St. Thomas by Launceston:

*24 Jun 1703 **Nicholas Tapson** of Bridestow & **Ann Gould** of Okehampton by Licence*

and their first child, Nicholas, was baptized seven months later. Their son Ebsworthy #7 must have died before the birth of Ebsworthy #10; so his burial would have been on either 5 January 1706/7 or 23 February 1707/8, the other burial being probably of an Ebsworthy born before 1696 (page 161).

The register for Lydford, a parish adjoining Bridestowe, contains the marriage entry:

*1 Feb 1726 **Nicholas Tapson** of Bridestowe & **Margaret Jagoe** of Lydford by licence*

As will soon be demonstrated (page 136), this was the marriage of Nicholas #6 and Margaret, the parents of Family D, whose first child, Henry, was baptized less than five months later. It was Ann #8 who married William Coombe at Bridestowe on 29 September 1731; confirmation of this too will shortly be given (page 136). And it is likely to have been Mary #9 whose name appears in an entry for 30 June 1735 of Mann's transcript of Exeter Marriage Licences:

***John Newcomb** of Bridestowe, husbandman, & **Mary Tapson** of same, spinster*

for, unless she was a sojourner, there would have been no other Mary Tapson living in Bridestowe at that time. Mary would have been 23 at the time of this marriage which took place on 30 June 1735 at Exeter, in the Cathedral of St. Peter; the groom's name was spelt *Newcombe* in the cathedral register.

In 1737 Ebsworthy #10 was planning to marry, so his father, Nicholas, drew up a marriage settlement whereby, instead of all the Tapson lands passing on his death by *primogenitor* to his eldest son Nicholas #6, his second son Ebsworthy would inherit Little Bidlake. This marriage settlement took the form of a Lease and Release (page 39) of Little Bidlake to two feoffees to uses.

Marriage Settlement dated 1 & 2 July 1737 (Abstract)

LEASE Indenture dated 1 July, 11 George II, between

1. Nicholas Tapson of Bridestow, yeoman
2. Peter Burnaford of Lamerton, clerke
   John Herring of Tavistock, gentleman

Witnesseth that Nicholas Tapson, in consideration of the sum of five shillings paid to him by Peter Burnaford and John Herring, bargains and sells to them Little Bidlake for one year.

RELEASE Indenture Quadrupartite dated 2 July, 11 George II, between

1. Nicholas Tapson of Bridestow, yeoman
   Anne his wife
2. Ebsworthy Tapson of Bridestow, son of Nicholas Tapson
3. Thomas Burnaford of Lydford, clerke
   Dionisia Burnaford, spinster, daughter of Thomas Burnaford
4. Peter Burnaford of Lamerton, clerke
   John Herring of Tavistock, gentleman

Witnesses that Nicholas Tapson, in consideration of the intended marriage between Ebsworthy Tapson and Dionisia Burnaford and £100 marriage portion paid to him or Ebsworthy by Thomas Burnaford for the maintenance of Ebsworthy and of Dionisia if she survive him, grants bargains sells aliens enfeoffes releases and confirms to Peter Burnaford and John Herring Little Bidlake for the use of

a) Nicholas Tapson for life (subject to £8 p.a. annuity)
then b) Ebsworthy Tapson for life (subject to £8 p.a. annuity)
then c) Dionisia for life (subject to £8 p.a. annuity)
then d) The heirs of Nicholas Tapson forever (subject to £8 p.a. annuity).

If Ebsworthy dies before Nicholas, Dionisia to receive the £8 annuity during the lifetime of Nicholas.
If Nicholas dies before Anne, Anne to receive the £8 annuity for life and to have the use of and access to the Parlour and Parlour Chamber of these premises.

The lease and (two copies of) the release (DRO 189M Add2/F3-5) are extremely long documents; the release takes the form of an indenture between four parties. By the end of the Sixteenth Century often only one copy of a document was made, which the purchaser would retain as proof of title, the vendor normally having little use for a copy. However, the top edge of the parchment continued to be indented; when further copies were made they usually did not fit together. In the post-Mediæval period an indenture could consist of several full-sized sheets of parchment, usually stitched together along the bottom.

The marriage is recorded in the Lydford parish register:

2 Jul 1737 ***Ebsworthy Tapson*** *of Bridestowe and* ***Dionisia Burnaford*** *of Lidford by licence*

In Mann's transcript of Exeter Marriage Licences Ebsworthy is described as a *yeoman* and Dionisia as a *spinster*. In 1701 Dionisia's father, Thomas Burnaford, had been appointed rector of Lydford, one of the parishes adjoining Bridestowe and geographically the largest in England, extending over nearly 60,000 acres to cover the greater part of Dartmoor; however, the village of Lydford is only three miles south of Bridestowe village. [The term *clerk* at that time meant *Clerk in Holy Orders*.] That Thomas Burnaford could afford £100 as his part of the marriage settlement suggests that he was a man of considerable means. Peter Burnaford was either Thomas's very much younger brother or, perhaps more likely, his son; the register of Lamerton (9 miles from Bridestowe) shows Thomas, *son of Thomas Burnaford*, to have been baptized on 1 January 1671/2 and Peter, *son of Thomas Burnaford*, on 6 October 1692. The records of the *Alumni Oxonienses* and of the *Alumni Cantabrigienses* provide the information that Thomas matriculated on 22 March 1688/9 at Exeter College, Oxford, aged 17, and obtained a B.A. at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, in 1692, and that Peter matriculated on 31 March 1710, aged 17, at Exeter College, Oxford, whence he graduated in 1713. Peter was appointed vicar of Colyton, Devonshire, in 1729 and rector of Bridestowe in 1734, where he remained until his death in December 1778;• Thomas was rector of Lydford from 1701 to 1740. Since it was customary in a marriage settlement for one of the feoffees to be on the bride's side and the other to be on the groom's side, it is likely that John Herring was a friend or relative of Nicholas. As a result of the 1737 marriage settlement Peter Burnaford and John Herring effectively held Little Bidlake in trust until the death of Nicholas, who would however continue to benefit from it during his lifetime.

Six months after Ebsworthy's wedding Nicholas's eldest son and heir, Nicholas #6, died; he was buried at Bridestowe on 31 January 1737/8 close to the south wall of the church and just to the right of the south porch, this prime position perhaps reflecting the importance within the village of the Tapsons of Ebsworthy Town, the address given in Nicholas's burial entry. Nicholas #6 would have been just 34; that this burial was his is confirmed by the inscription on the headstone of his grave:

Here lies the body of Nicholas y^e^ son of Nicholas Tapson Sen^r^ & Anne
his wife of this parish who died y^e^ 29^th^ day of Jan^y^ 1737 Aged 34
Although my flesh is gone to dust
I hope to rise again
And with the number of the just
For ever to remain

The settlement made by Alexander Ebsworthy at the time of the marriage of his daughter Agnes to Nicholas Tapson of Buckland Monachorum (page 109) imposed an entail (page 108) on the properties being conveyed whereby, in the event of Nicholas's death without issue of Agnes, these properties would have reverted to the Ebsworthy family. It was probably this entail which the later Nicholas Tapson now sought to break so that, his eldest son and heir dead, his second son Ebsworthy might inherit all his lands without any legal complications. The legal device for breaking an entail was known as *docking a tail*, and from 1536 could be achieved by means of a Fine (page 38). Abstracts are now given of the Deed to lead to the uses of a Fine (page 108) and of a copy of the Final Concord (DRO 189M Add 2/F6, 7). These documents are of particular interest in that they reveal that, of all the properties which Alexander Ebsworthy settled on Nicholas Tapson and Agnes in January 1633/4, only Gnattor was no longer owned by the family over a century later; they also give details of the extent and nature of the Tapson properties.

•The Lamerton parish register has an entry for 23 December 1778: *The Rev^d^ Peter Burnaford Rector of Bridestowe and Sourton and formerly Curate of this Parish was buried aged 86*

Deed to lead to the Uses of a Fine dated 15 April 1738 (Abstract)

Indenture dated 15 April, 11 George II, between

1. Nicholas Tapson of Briddistow, yeoman
   Anne his wife
2. John Luxmoore of Okehampton, gentleman

Recites the 1737 marriage settlement by Lease and Release.
Witnesseth that whereas the said Nicholas Tapson is seized in Fee Tail or some other Estate of Inheritance of the premises called Ebsworthy, Ebsworthy Wood, Easter Bidlake and Blatchford, now in the several possessions of Nicholas Tapson, Ebsworthy Tapson his son, and Peter Pellow their tenant, or undertenants, it is covenanted for the better strengthening the said Release and for the Docking of all Estates Tail that Nicholas Tapson and Anne his wife shall levy unto John Luxmoore one Fine by the name or names of four messuages, five orchards, five gardens, thirty acres of meadow, fifty acres of land, thirty acres of pasture, fifty acres of wood, thirty acres of furze and heath, forty acres of moor and common of pasture in Ebsworthy, Ebsworthy Wood, Easter Bidlake and Blatchford and it is agreed that the said Fine shall enure and that John Luxmoore shall stand seized of the premises to the several uses, interests and purposes in the said Release mentioned and by way of confirming, strengthening and corroborating the same.

Final Concord dated Easter Term 1738 (Abstract)

Indenture dated Easter Term 1738 between

1. John Luxmoore, plaintiff
2. Nicholas Tapson
   Anne his wife, deforciants of the premises

Confirms the details of the Deed to lead to the uses of a Fine.
States that John Luxmoore had given to Nicholas Tapson and Anne £160.

It is not clear why, as a feoffee to uses, John Luxmoore, who was presumably a friend of Nicholas, or his lawyer, should have given him £160 for the privilege; nor is it clear how he stood, as a trustee, in relation to Peter Burnaford and John Herring, who presumably remained feoffees to uses of Little Bidlake.

Nicholas's will was proved in the Archidiaconal Court of Totnes on 8 May 1751 on the oath of Ebsworthy Tapson, the Executor; it was destroyed along with all the other wills in the bishop's probate registry in 1942. Fortunately, however, a copy (DRO 189M Add 2/W1) had been made by Thomas Trist, a procurator general, as part of the process for establishing ownership in a subsequent property conveyance. By naming his surviving children (Henry, John, Nicholas, Robert and Anne) the will confirms that Nicholas #6 was the father of family D (page 134), and that *Ebsworthy, the son of Nicholas Tapson* buried on 4 August 1735 was his son. The will makes it clear that it was Ann #8 who married William Coombe (page 134) and, by naming John Newcombe as trustee for a £10 bequest to Ann, the will adds weight to the likelihood (page 134) that John was the husband of Mary #9. Mary is not mentioned in the will: whether this is because she was already dead, or because John Newcombe was well able to support her, is not certain; he is described in the marriage licence as a *husbandman*, but their marrying in Exeter Cathedral suggests some degree of prosperity and social status, and he is referred to in Nicholas's will (page 137) as a *yeoman*.

Catherine #11 was not married by 1742 when the will was drawn up; her legacy was £60 and her bed performed (i.e. fully furnished). Robert #12 received no mention in the will; it seems probable therefore that his was the burial on 18 November 1740, when he would have been 19 years old. The will makes special provision for Henry #19, requiring Ebsworthy, out of the proceeds of the estates, to provide for him for the rest of his life; this suggests that Henry was handicapped — physically or mentally — and unlikely to be able to provide for himself. Henry seems not to have married, and he would have been nearly 57 when *Henry Tapson, aged 57* was buried on 1 March 1784.

The Will of Nicholas Tapson dated 18 September 1742

IN THE NAME OF GOD AMEN I Nicholas Tapson of Briddestow in the County of Devon Yeoman being in Health of Body and of a sound and perfect Mind and Memory ..... do hereby make publish and declare this my last Will and Testament ..... And Whereas in and by certain Indentures of Lease and Release bearing date the first and second days of July One thousand seven hundred and thirty seven upon the conclusion of a Marriage which is since solemnized between Ebsworthy Tapson my Son and Dionissa Burnaford I the said Nicholas Tapson Did thereby convey unto Peter Burnaford Clerk and John Herring Gentleman and their Heirs All that Messuage or Tenement called Easter Bidlake otherwise Little Bidlake otherwise Lower Bidlake To the Use of myself and my Assigns during my naturall Life Subject to the Annuity therein mentioned And after my Death To the Use of the said Ebsworthy Tapson and his Assigns during his Life Subject to the Annuity therein mentioned And after the Deaths of me the said Nicholas Tapson and the said Ebsworthy Tapson To the Use of the said Dionissa during her naturall Life Subject to the Annuity therein mentioned And after the Deaths of me the said Nicholas Tapson the said Ebsworthy Tapson & Dionissa his wife Then to the Use and behoofe of the Heirs and Assigns of me the said Nicholas Tapson for ever Now I hereby Give Devise and bequeath the reversion and Inheritance of All and singular the said Messuage and Tenement called Easter Bidlake otherwise Little Bidlake otherwise Lower Bidlake with their and every of their Rights Members and Appurtenances unto the said Ebsworthy Tapson my Son his Heirs and Assigns forever ..... I also Give Devise and bequeath unto the said Ebsworthy Tapson my Son his Heirs and Assigns forever All that my Messuage and Tenement with the Appurtenances called or commonly known by the name of Blatchford situate lying and being in Sourton in the said County of Devon now in the possession of Peter Pellow ..... I also Give and bequeath unto each of my four Grand Children John Nicholas Robert and Anne Sons and Daughter of my Son Nicholas Tapson deceased the Sum of Five Pounds apiece to be paid them severally when and as they shall respectively attain the Age of Twenty one Years by the said Ebsworthy Tapson ..... I also Give Devise and bequeath unto the said Ebsworthy Tapson my Son his Heirs and Assigns forever All that my Messuage and Tenement with all its Rights Members and Appurtenances called or commonly known by the name of Ebsworthy situate lying and being in the said Parish of Briddestow But Subject to and chargeable with the Maintenance Apparell Clothing and Education of my Grand Son Henry Tapson Son of my said son Nicholas for and during the Term of his naturall Life ..... I do hereby order direct and appoint That he ..... find and provide to and for Henry Tapson ..... good and sufficient Meat Drink Washing Lodging and Apparell of every sort fit and convenient for a Person of his Degree ..... I Also Give and bequeath unto John Newcombe of Briddestow aforesaid Yeoman the Sum of Ten Pounds to be paid unto him by my Executor within one Year after my decease In trust to and for the only sole and separate Use Benefit and Behoofe of my Daughter Anne the Wife of William Coombe of Sourton aforesaid Yeoman separate and apart from her said Husband And to be disposed of as she the said Anne shall think fitt without his Controul or Intermeddling therein ..... I Also Give and bequeath unto Catherine my Daughter the Sum of Sixty Pounds ..... I also Give and bequeath unto the said Catherine my Daughter the Bed performed in which she usually lyes I also give unto Anne my Wife the Use of my best Bed performed in the Parlour Chamber The Table Board Cubboard and four Chairs in the Parlour, one Brass Pott, one Brass Pan Six Pewter Dishes and Six Pewter Plates such as She shall think proper to choose for her naturall Life And after her Death I Give and bequeath the same unto the said Ebsworthy Tapson my Son ..... And I do hereby order direct and appoint that the said Ebsworthy Tapson his Heirs Executors and Administrators do and shall at his and their own Cost and Charges maintain educate and provide for my said four Grand Children John Nicholas Robert and Anne untill they shall respectively attain their several Ages of Twenty one Years ..... All the rest and residue of my Lands Tenements Goods Chattles Household Goods ready Money Bills Bonds and Mortgages not herein before given and bequeathed I Give Devise and bequeath unto the said Ebsworthy Tapson my Son And I do hereby make constitute ordain and appoint him the said Ebsworthy Tapson to be the whole and sole Executor of this my last Will and Testament He paying my just Debts Legacys and Funeral Expenses In witness whereof I have hereunto sett my Hand and Seal & published and declared this to be my last Will and Testament the Eighteenth day of September in the Year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and forty two Nicholas Tapson

Nicholas's burial was on 15 November 1750, six months before his will was proved. His wife, Anne, was still alive when his will was written in 1742, and the only burial in Bridestowe between that date and 1793 of an Anne Tapson took place on 9 May 1759; the title *Mrs* in the burial entry probably reflects both the social status of the Tapsons of Ebsworthy Town and Anne's venerable age, for she had been married in 1703. However, Anne had not learnt to write: she made her mark on the marriage settlement of 1737.

A Quarter Sessions record for 1713 (DRO QS7/2) gives an indication of Nicholas's standing in the village community; it begins:

> *A Booke of the Names of Freeholders, Coppyholders and Customary Tennants etc given in by the Constables to the Courte att Michaelmas Sessions Anno Domini 1713 to serve in Juryes for the year ensueing according to the Statute in that case made and provided etc*

Potential jurors were chosen by parish and were assumed to be immune to bribery; those nominated from Bridestowe parish for jury service during the 1713 Devon Quarter Sessions were:

Henry Bidlake gent
Nicholas Tapson yeoman
John Newton yeoman

Nicholas had been married ten years before in 1703.

Henry Bidlake gent and *Nicholas Tapson yeoman* were nominated for jury service again in 1714 (DRO QS7/3) and in 1717 (DRO QS7/5); in 1720 (DRO QS7/8) the only Bridestowe name was *Nicholas Tapson*. There were no nominations for jury service from Bridestowe in 1711 (DRO QS7/1), 1715 (DRO QS7/4), 1718 (DRO QS7/6) or 1719 (DRO QS7/7), but the *Freeholders Book 1715* begins

> *Devon A Booke of the Names of Freeholders Coppyholders Customary Tennants and Tennants in Ancient Demeasne retorned and given in by the Constables of the severall hundreds of the County aforesaid att the Generall Quarter Sessions of the peace held at the Castle of Exon in and for the said County the Fourth day of October Anno Domini 1715*

This confirms that Nicholas would have had to make a journey of nearly 30 miles each way between Bridestowe and Exeter whenever he was called for jury service. Whether or not Nicholas continued to serve in this capacity is not known, since further Freeholders Books of the period have not survived.

Perhaps one of the more intriguing aspects of Nicholas's will is the importance he attached to such domestic objects as pots and pans, table boards, cupboards and beds performed; the impression given is of a household very basically furnished and without too much comfort. One wonders what he would think of the present acquisitive and throw-away society in which such items as he included in his will, and obviously considered valuable, would be regarded by the next generation as so much junk. And what would he have to say about the noisy new A30 trunk road, which passes across his land just a few hundred yards to the north of Ebsworthy Town and even closer to Blatchford hamlet, as it carrys its continuous stream of heavy lorries and fast cars to and from Cornwall, whilst, overhead, ground-hugging fighter-jets scream menacingly as they use the contours of Dartmoor to test out both their radar-controlled, computerized navigational systems and the iron nerves of their pilots.

Nicholas's relationship to Nicholas Tapson of Buckland Monachorum who married Agnes Ebsworthy on 21 February 1632/3 will be discussed later (page 161). Clearly the properties of Ebsworthy, Easter Bidlake and Blatchford had remained in the Tapson family; only Gnattor, some distance away in Peter Tavy parish, was now no longer held by them. Ordnance Survey maps show that, although Blatchford is in the parish of Sourton (pronounced *Sor-ton*), the properties which had remained in the Tapson family (Ebsworthy, Easter Bidlake and Blatchford) are adjacent. Of particular interest is the fact that *Ebsworthy*, originally the name of an estate and then the surname of the family who owned and farmed it, had now become a forename in the Tapson family. The importance to the Tapsons of Bridestowe of the forename *Ebsworthy* is demonstrated by the fact that, when his first son to be so named died, Nicholas gave the name to his next son to be born. A glance through the Bridestowe baptisms (pages 130, 131) reveals the name occurring frequently.

5.3 EBSWORTHY TAPSON, YEOMAN, BRIDESTOWE #10

Even though she was the rector's daughter, the marriage at Lydford on 2 July 1737 of Ebsworthy Tapson and Dionisia Burnaford (page 135) was followed fully two weeks later by the baptism, also at Lydford, of their first child (shown as #24a on the family tree — Family E):

18 Jul 1737 Anne dau of Ebsworthy Tapson and Dionisia his wife

It must have been this Anne who was buried shortly afterwards at Bridestowe, on 18 September 1737. The baptisms of further children of Ebsworthy and Dionisia are recorded in the Bridestowe register, quickly followed by the burials of Ebsworthy (4 February 1738/9), Elizabeth (20 October 1746), Nicholas (19 February 1749/50), another Nicholas (27 April 1750) and John (13 July 1754). So, after such a promising start to their marriage, Ebsworthy and Dionisia, the son and heir of a respected landowner and the daughter of a well-to-do country parson, were to suffer the trauma of losing, one after the other, their first six children, all of whom died in infancy. They had to wait more than seventeen years after their marriage for the birth of their only daughter to survive childhood, and another three years for the birth of their only son so to do.

Further light is thrown on the properties and on the farming activities of the Tapsons by Land Tax Assessments. Land tax was first regularly imposed in 1697; in 1772 the returns were altered to incorporate a list of all the occupiers of land in each parish. From 1780 duplicates had to be lodged with the Clerk of the Peace, and many of these duplicates, up to 1832, have survived; those for Devonshire are now in the Devon Record Office. The 1780 return clearly shows that the Ebsworthy estate was divided into four tenements of equal rateable value, of which Ebsworthy Tapson held just one; the following items from it relate to the Tapsons and their properties in Bridestowe:

Bridestowe Land Tax Assessment 1780

PROPRIETOR	*OCCUPIER*	*PROPERTY*	£	s	d
William Arendel Harris Esq^{r}	*Ebsworthy Tapson*	*Lowerstone*	*2*	*5*	*4*
Do	*Nicholas Tapson*	*Crospark*	*0*	*14*	*0*
Arthur Termain Esq^{r}	*Rich^{d} Maddaford*	*Ebsworthy*	*1*	*4*	*0*
Rev.Thomas Haberden	*Jn^{o} Newton & Jn^{o} Tapson*	*Rectory*	*1 0*	*0*	*0*
Do	*John Tapson*	*Denble Park*	*0*	*9*	*1*
Do	*Do*	*Tannars Meadow*	*0*	*9*	*1*
John Wolcome Esq^{r}	*John Martyn*	*Ebsworthy*	*1*	*4*	*0*
Do	*Roger Tickle*	*Ebsworthy*	*1*	*4*	*0*
Ebsworthy Tapson	*Ebsworthy Tapson*	*Ebsworthy*	*1*	*4*	*0*
Do	*Nicholas Tapson*	*Little Bidlak*	*1*	*10*	*3*
George Passons	*Nicholas Tapson*	*Fenworthy*	*2*	*2*	*0*

It is doubtful whether the Tapsons, or even the Ebsworthys before them, ever owned more than one quarter of the original Ebsworthy estate. In an indenture dated 26 December 1682 (DRO DD30300) Henry Walter of Ashbury, Devon, Esq., leased Ebsworthie [i.e. one of the four tenements] for 99 years to John Tickle of Bridestowe, yeoman; it was formerly in the occupation of Christopher Drew, then Charles Tickle (father of John Tickle) and then John Tickle himself, by virtue of an Indenture of Lease dated 4 July 1650 between Sir Chichester Wrey of Trebeigh(?), Cornwall, and Richard Tickle of Bridestowe, husbandman. So by the time of the 1780 assessment this 99 year lease was still held by the Tickle family, as it had been since at least 1650, and had a full year left to run; in the meantime ownership of the tenement had passed from the Walter family to John Woolcombe Esq. And in another indenture, dated 8 November 1723, (DRO 158M/T64) Arthur Tremayne of Sydenham, Devon, Esq., leased a messuage and tenement in the Village of Ebsworthy Towne for 99 years to Richard Yeldon of Bridestowe, yeoman; it was formerly in the possession of Richard Yeldon, his wife, and Peter Ebsworthy of Bridestowe, yeoman, by virtue of an Indenture of Lease dated 7 January 1706. By 1780 occupancy of this tenement had passed to Richard Maddaford, but it was still owned by the Tremaine family.

The only changes shown in the 1781 return are that John Tapson no longer had a share in Rectory Farm (but he had retained *Denbole Park* and *Tanners Meadow*) and the property of which Ebsworthy Tapson was proprietor is recorded thus:

Ebsworthy Tapson	*John Brok*	*Ebsworthy Town*	*1*	*4*	*0*
Do	*Ebsworthy Tapson jun^{r}*	*Little bidlake*	*1*	*10*	*3*

Ebsworthy Tapson Junior, the only surviving son of Ebsworthy and Dionisia, had taken over the occupancy of Little Bidlake from Nicholas Tapson, and Ebsworthy Tapson Senior #10 had rented out Ebsworthy to John Brock. Details will be given later of his nephews, John Tapson (page 152) and Nicholas Tapson (page 151), who are listed in these assessments as occupiers. The 1782 assessment makes it clear that it was Ebsworthy Tapson Senior who was renting land at Lower Stone, which was probably part of the estate known as Stone on the other side from Bidlake of the old Okehampton to Launceston road (which had been the A30 before the construction of the new trunk road) — *William atte Stone* and *Richard of the same* paid tax in the 1332 lay subsidy (page 107):

Bridestowe Land Tax Assessment 1782

William Arundel Harris Esq^{r}	*Ebsworthy Tapson Sen^{r}*	*Lower Stone*	*2*	*5*	*4*
Do	*Nicholas Tapson*	*Cros Park*	*0*	*14*	*0*
Arthur Tremayne Esq^{r}	*Richard Maddaford*	*Ebsworthy Town*	*1*	*4*	*0*
The Rev^{d} Tho^{s} Heberden Clerk	*John Tapson*	*Denbole Park*	*0*	*9*	*1*
Do	*Do*	*Tanners medow*	*0*	*9*	*1*
John Moarse Woolcombe Esq^{r}	*John Martyn*	*Ebsworthy Town*	*1*	*4*	*0*
Do	*Roger Tickle*	*Ebsworthy Town*	*1*	*4*	*0*
Richard Maddaford	*Richard Maddaford*	*Ebsworthy Town*	*1*	*4*	*0*
Ebsworthy Tapson Sen^{r}	*Ebsworthy Tapson Jun^{r}*	*Little Bidlake*	*1*	*10*	*3*

It comes as a shock to see that Richard Maddaford, who in 1780 and 1781 had been farming the Ebsworthy tenement owned by Arthur Tremaine Esq., has now also acquired, as proprietor as well as occupier, the Tapson quarter of the Ebsworthy estate. Ebsworthy Tapson Senior continued to rent Lower Stone, whilst Ebsworthy Tapson Junior farmed Little Bidlake; Ebsworthy itself was no longer theirs. However, Ebsworthy Tapson Senior remained the proprietor of Little Bidlake and also of Blatchford in Sourton, as is confirmed by the land tax assessments for that parish:

Sourton Land Tax Assessment 1780

John Woollcombe & Warwick Calmady Esq^{rs} & M^{r} Ebsw^{y} Tapson	*James Pellow*	*Blatchford*	*3*	*7*	*0*

It would appear that the Blatchford estate consisted of three tenements, of which the Tapsons held one. An ancestor of John Woolcombe, also named John and probably his father or grandfather, had bought the Woolcombe tenement of Blatchford from John and Robert Tapson of Bratton Clovelly in 1701 (page 87). It is stated in the 1742 will of Nicholas Tapson (page 137) that Blatchford was in the possession of Peter Pellow; this assessment reveals that the Pellow family continued to farm there, not only the Tapson tenement but the other two as well. The assessment for 1781 shows no changes at Blatchford, but by 1782 John Woolcombe had bought out Warwick Calmady:

Sourton Land Tax Assessment 1782

Jn^{o} Woollcombe Esq^{r}	*Jn^{o} Pellow*	*Blatchford*	*1*	*18*	*0*
Ebsworthy Tapson	*Do*	*Blatchford*		*19*	*0*

The three Blatchford tenements were equally assessed for tax at 19 shillings each; this implies that the assessments for 1780 and 1781 were wrongly calculated, an error corrected in later assessments (page 142), since 3 × 19 shillings = £2 - 17 - 0.

At the end of May 1782 Dionisia died; her funeral was held at Bridestowe on 1 June 1782. The family were obviously in financial dificulties because, in the December of that year, Ebsworthy Tapson Senior and Ebsworthy Tapson Junior were forced to take out a mortgage of £200 on Little Bidlake. The mortgagor was Henry Jole, a cordwainer from Okehampton, and the mortgage documents took the form of a Lease and Release (DRO 189M Add 2/T28, 29):

Mortgage of Little Bidlake (Abstract)

LEASE Indenture dated 19 December 1782 between

1. Ebsworthy Tapson of Bridestowe, yeoman
   Ebsworthy Tapson the younger of Bridestowe, yeoman
2. Henry Jole of Okehampton, cordwainer

Witnesses that Ebsworthy Tapson and Ebsworthy Tapson the younger, in consideration of the sum of five shillings to each of them paid by Henry Jole, bargain and sell to him Easter Bidlake for one year.

RELEASE Indenture dated 20 December 1782 between

1. Ebsworthy Tapson of Bridestowe, yeoman
   Ebsworthy Tapson his son, yeoman
   Ann his wife
2. Henry Jole of Okehampton, cordwainer

Witnesses that Ebsworthy Tapson, Ebsworthy Tapson the younger and Ann, in consideration of £200 lent by Henry Jole, grant bargain sell release and confirm unto him Little Bidlake, subject to a proviso for redemption on payment of £200 and lawful interest on 20 June next.

Ann, also named in the mortgage deed, had been married to Ebsworthy Tapson Junior for four years; their marriage entry in the parish register, dated 23 November 1778, records that she was formerly Ann Tapson, also of Bridestowe. At the time of their marriage Ebsworthy would have been 20 years old, so his wife was almost certainly his second cousin, #43, just four years older than himself. In view of their need to take out this mortgage we may reasonably infer that the two Ebsworthy Tapsons had sold Ebsworthy a short while before because they urgently needed to raise funds. The inclusion of both Ebsworthy Tapson Junior and his wife in the mortgage deed suggests that by this time he was very much involved in the management of the farm, although it was probably still his father, then getting on in years, who continued to rent Lower Stone in 1783:

Bridestowe Land Tax Assessment 1783

Warwick Calmady Esq^{r}	*Robert Tapson*	*Higher Waterleats*	*0*	*10*	*0*
William Arundel Harris Esq^{r}	*Ebsworthy Tapson*	*Lower Stone*	*2*	*5*	*4*
The Rev^{d} Tho^{s} Heberden Clerk	*John Tapson*	*Denbole Park*	*0*	*9*	*1*
Do	*John Tapson*	*Tanners Meadow*	*0*	*9*	*1*
Ebsworthy Tapson Sen^{r}	*Ebsworthy Tapson Jun^{r}*	*Little Bidlake*	*1*	*10*	*3*

Reference will be made later (page 158) to Robert Tapson, whose name now appears in these assessments for the first time. There were no further changes shown in the Tapson holdings in the 1784 assessment for Bridestowe, and the 1783 and 1784 assessments for Sourton were identical with that of 1782. However, Ebsworthy Tapson Senior died in 1784; his funeral was on 16 June. He would have been in his 70th year, the age given for him in the burial entry.

Little Bidlake and Blatchford now passed to Ebsworthy Tapson Junior, together with the mortgage liability on Little Bidlake; as will soon be revealed, his troubles were only just beginning. We shall probably never know for certain the reason for this downturn in their family fortunes, although a story has come down in one branch of the Tapson family (that of the descendants of Ebsworthy #42, a brother of the wife of Ebsworthy Tapson Junior) that gambling debts were the cause of the problem. No written evidence has survived to support this tale; nevertheless there could be at least a grain of truth in it.●

● See the NOTE on page 443

5.4 EBSWORTHY TAPSON, YEOMAN, BRIDESTOWE #31

That Ebsworthy Tapson Junior and Ann were the parents of Family H is clear from their naming one daughter Mary Burnaford and two other daughters Dionysia, after their grandmother. The first Dionysia must have died before the baptism of the second, though there is no burial entry for her at Bridestowe, where their son Robert was buried on 25 July 1791. The next evidence about the fortunes of Ebsworthy and Ann is provided by the land tax assessments for Sourton. That for 1785 has not survived, but the 1786 assessment is identical with those for 1782 1783 and 1784 (page 140). Those for 1787 through to 1791 show no real change, although the format is slightly different:

John Woollcombe Esq^{r} & M^{r} Tapson	*John Pellow*	*Blatchford*	*2*	*17*	*0*

But the assessment for 1792 shows that, just ten years after losing Ebsworthy, the Tapsons had now also lost Blatchford:

John Woollcombe Esq^{r}	*John Pellow*	*3 Blatchfords*	*2*	*17*	*0*

However, Ebsworthy continued to own and farm Little Bidlake. Like that for Sourton, the 1785 land tax assessment for Bridestowe has not survived; Tapson entries from the 1786 return are now given:

Bridestowe Land Tax Assessment 1786

Warwick Calmady Esq^{r}	*Robert Tapson*	*Higher Waterleets*	*0*	*10*	*0*
The Rev^{d} Tho^{s} Herbenden	*John Tapson*	*Tenement*	*0*	*14*	*0*
Do	*John Tapson*	*Denbole Park*	*0*	*9*	*1*
Do	*John Tapson*	*Tanners Meadow*	*0*	*9*	*1*
Eb^{s} Tapson	*Ebsworthy Tapson*	*Little Bidlake*	*1*	*10*	*3*

The Bridestowe assessment for 1787 shows little change, except that *Tenement* is replaced by *North Ball Bridhays* (assessed at £0 14 8), and John's properties are now rented from the *Rev^{d} Coryndon Luxmoore*, who was rector of Bridestowe from 1786 to 1845. The only further change in 1788 is that, instead of *North Ball Bridhays,* John was renting *Standon* (assessed at £1 5 0). By 1789, however, Ebsworthy had rented out Little Bidlake:

Bridestowe Land Tax Assessment 1789

Warwick Calmady Es^{q}	*Rob^{t} Tapson*	*Higher Waterleets*	*0*	*10*	*0*
Rev^{d} M^{r} Corrindon Luxmoore	*J^{o} Tapson*	*Standon*	*1*	*5*	*0*
Do	*Will^{m} Tapson*	*Denbels park*	*0*	*9*	*1*
Do	*J^{o} Tapson*	*Tanner Meadow*	*0*	*9*	*1*
Ebsworthy Tapson	*J^{o} Brook*	*Little Bidlake*	*1*	*10*	*3*

John's son William Tapson will be discussed later (page 156). The return for 1790 is identical; and in 1791 the only change is that there was no longer a Tapson at Denbole Park — William Tapson had given up farming. [John Tapson was a collector in 1789 and an assessor in 1790: the normal practice was to collect one year and to assess the next.] Although Ebsworthy Tapson did not appear as an occupier in 1789, 1790 and 1791, he was farming again in Bridestowe by 1792:

Bridestowe Land Tax Assessment 1792

Warwick Calmady & Christopher Hamlyn Esq^{rs}	*Robert Tapson*	*Higher Waterleets*	*0*	*10*	*0*
Will^{m} Arundle Harries Esq^{r}	*Ebsworthy Tapson*	*¼ Sprighill*	*0*	*4*	*6*
Rev^{d} M^{r} Luxmoore	*John Tapson*	*Standen*	*1*	*5*	*0*
Do	*George Tapson*	*Tanners Meadow*	*0*	*9*	*1*
M^{rs} Mary Luxmoore & Sisters	*Ebsworthy Tapson*	*¾ of Sprighill*	*0*	*13*	*6*
Ebsworthy Tapson	*Ebsworthy Tapson*	*Little Bidlake*	*1*	*10*	*3*

George (page 154), John Tapson's youngest son, had taken over Tanner's Meadow. The only change in the Bridestowe return for 1793 is that Ebsworthy was no longer renting Sprighill.

Bridestowe Land Tax Assessment 1794

Rev M^r Luxmoore	*John Tapson*	*Standen*	*1*	*5*	*0*
Do	*George Tapson*	*Tanners Meadow*	*0*	*9*	*1*
M^r Eb^s Tapson	*Eb^s Tapson*	*Little Bidlake*	*1*	*10*	*3*

There is no change in 1795, but by 1796 Ebsworthy is the only Tapson listed:

Bridestowe Land Tax Assessment 1796

M^r Eb^s Tapson	*Eb^s Tapson*	*Little Bidlake*	*1*	*10*	*3*

The returns for 1797 and 1798 are the same. [Ebsworthy and Richard Maddaford were the collectors in 1797 and the assessors in 1798.] The return for 1799 has not survived; but Ebsworthy's financial problems were again acute. In May 1799, not having repaid the £200 mortgage taken out over sixteen years earlier, or any of the interest, he and Ann needed a further loan, by December another, and by the following October yet another (DRO 189M Add 2/T30-32):

Second Mortgage of Little Bidlake (Abstract)

LEASE Indenture dated 31 May 1799 between
1. Ebsworthy Tapson and Ann his wife
2. Henry Jole, gentleman

Recites that Ebsworthy Tapson had not paid to Henry Jole the sum of £200 or the interest thereon and that Henry Jole had lent Ebsworthy Tapson a further £35 making in all £400.
Witnesses that Ebsworthy Tapson and Ann covenant promise and agree that Little Bidlake stand charged with the payment of £400, subject to a proviso for redemption on payment of £400 and lawful interest on 30 June next.

Third Mortgage of Little Bidlake (Abstract)

LEASE Indenture dated 21 December 1799 between
1. Ebsworthy Tapson and Ann his wife
2. Henry Jole

Mentions that the elder Ebsworthy is since deceased
Recites that Ebsworthy Tapson was indebted to Henry Jole by £411 13s 4d and that Henry Jole had lent him a further £48 6s 8d making in all £460.
Witnesses that Ebsworthy Tapson and Ann covenant promise and agree that Little Bidlake stand charged with the payment of £460, subject to a proviso for redemption on payment of £460 and lawful interest on 30 June next.

Fourth Mortgage of Little Bidlake (Abstract)

LEASE Indenture dated 21 October 1800 between
1. Ebsworthy Tapson of Okehampton, yeoman, and Ann his wife
   Nicholas Tapson their son of the same place, yeoman
2. Henry Jole

Recites that Ebsworthy Tapson was indebted to Henry Jole by £479 3s 4d and that Henry Jole had lent him a further £80 16s 8d making in all £560.
Witnesses that Ebsworthy, Ann and Nicholas covenant promise and agree that Little Bidlake and Ebsworthy Wood stand charged with the payment of £560 and grant bargain sell convey and confirm unto Henry Jole the aforesaid premises for 1000 years, subject to a proviso for redemption on payment of £560 and lawful interest on 21 April next.

It is interesting to note that Ebsworthy Wood had not been sold at the time of the sale of Ebsworthy; in the fourth mortgage this property was included with Little Bidlake for extra security, and, no doubt for the same reason, Nicholas, their eldest son then aged 21, was also made a party to the mortgage. We learn from this fourth mortgage that the family had moved to Okehampton; and it was in the register of that parish that the marriage of Ebsworthy's eldest daughter was recorded:

24 June 1800 ***Samuel Gooch & Mary Burnaford Tapson***

The Bridestowe land tax assessment for 1800 shows that Ebsworthy had let out Little Bidlake:

Bridestowe Land Tax Assessment 1800

Mr Ebsworthy Tapson	*William Rule*	*Little Bidlake*	*1*	*10*	*3*

The assessment for 1801 is unchanged. In February of that year Ebsworthy was again in financial trouble and needed to increase his mortgage once more (DRO 189M Add 2/T33):

Fifth Mortgage of Little Bidlake (Abstract)

LEASE Indenture dated 20 February 1801 between

1. Ebsworthy Tapson of Okehampton, yeoman, and Ann his wife
   Nicholas Tapson their son of the same place, yeoman
2. Henry Jole

Recites that Ebsworthy Tapson was indebted to Henry Jole by £569 6s 8d and that Henry Jole had lent him a further £30 13s 4d making in all £600.

Witnesses that Ebsworthy, Ann and Nicholas covenant promise and agree that Little Bidlake and Little Bidlake Wood stand charged with the payment of £600, subject to a provise for redemption on payment of £600 and lawful interest on 20 August next.

Although it is not mentioned in any of the documents, one can calculate that, from the time the first mortgage was taken out in 1782, Henry Jole had been charging Simple Interest at 5% on that and on each successive mortgage, the usual rate at the time. The situation had become so desperate by early summer of 1801 that there was no option but to sell Little Bidlake and Ebsworthy Wood. An *Abstract of Title* (DRO 189M Add/E8/2) drawn up by lawyers to confirm Ebsworthy's legal title to these two properties states, in a margin note, that Mr Woolcombe of Ashbury had purchased *a Farm called Blatchford Town of Mr Tapson*: this sale we have already noted (page 142).

The *Conditions of Survey* for the sale held *at the Royal Oak in Bridestowe on 29 June 1801 by Richard Sampson, a Licenced Auctioneer* (DRO 189M Add/E5/21) is endorsed:

29 June 1801. Mr John Colling purchased the abovementioned premises for the seller in the sum of Eleven hundred pounds. Witness my hand. Richd Sampson

John Colling was an Okehampton attorney. The *Contract for Little Bidlake*, dated 3 July 1801 (DRO 189M Add/E5/13) between John Colling (for Ebsworthy Tapson) and George Hill (for Ann Hiern) states that £45 was to be paid on signing the contract and £955 on 28 September. The actual conveyance took the form of a Lease and Release (DRO 189M Add 2/T34, 35):

Sale of Little Bidlake and Ebsworthy Wood(Abstract)

LEASE Indenture dated 3 November 1801 between

1. Ebsworthy Tapson of Okehampton, yeoman
   Ann his wife
   Nicholas Tapson of Launceston, Cornwall, yeoman (son)
   Henry Jole of Okehampton, gentleman
2. Ann Hiern of Launceston, spinster

Witnesses that Ebsworthy Tapson, Nicholas Tapson and Henry Jole, in consideration of the sum of five shillings to each of them paid by Ann Hiern, grant bargain and sell to her Little (or Lower) Bidlake and also all that woodland called Brimbleham (or Little Bidlake or Ebsworthy) Wood for one year.

5.5 NICHOLAS TAPSON, LABOURER, BRIDESTOWE #48

In 1800 Nicholas was living in Okehampton with his parents (page 143), but he had moved to Launceston by 1801 (page 144) and was in Shebbear, near Holsworthy, in 1804 (page 145). However, he was back in Bridestowe for his marriage on 20 February 1810 to Mary Coombe, and the subsequent baptisms of their ten children (Family N) are recorded in the Bridestowe parish register, as are the burials of four of them as infants: William on 9 February 1817, John on 25 July 1818, Elizabeth on 15 August 1819, and Dionysia on 23 May 1834. Nicholas himself was buried at Bridestowe on 4 January 1833, shortly before the baptism of Dionysia, whose baptismal entry names her father as *the late Nicholas Tapson*. In his burial entry Nicholas's age was given correctly as 53.

A census of England, Wales, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands has been held at ten-year intervals from 1801, except in 1941 during the Second World War. The first four censuses did not ask for the names of residents, so for the genealogist the first useful census is that of 1841. From 1841 the census returns list every person in each house on a given night (and night-workers who would return to the house in the morning). The dates of the returns currently available for inspection are 6/7 June 1841, 30/31 March 1851, 7/8 April 1861, 2/3 April 1871, 3/4 April 1881 and 5/6 April 1891. In the 1841 census exact ages are given only for children up to the age of 14; for adults ages are grouped into five-year bands: 15 is written for the band 15-19, 20 for the band 20-24, etc. In subsequent censuses exact ages were asked for, but not always forthcoming.

The 1841 census for Bridestowe (PRO HO107/231/6 Fo. 7) has the entry:

Mary Tapson	*45-49*	*Labourer*	*Born in Devonshire*
Robert Tapson	*11*		*Born in Devonshire*

Mary must be Nicholas's widow and Robert their youngest surviving child. The 1851 census provides much more detail, including marital status, occupation and place of birth (PRO HO107/1885 Fo. 262):

Bridestowe Village					
Mary Tapson	*Head*	*Wid*	*61*	*Pauper*	*Devon, Bridestowe*
John Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*24*	*Limequarry Lab*	*„ „*

Mary had taken two years off her age in the earlier census in order to put herself into a lower age bracket; her age given here is consistent with her having been married at the age of 20, and dates her birth to about 1790. At 21 Robert had left home, but John was back with his mother. It is a sad observation that the widow of the eldest grandson of Ebsworthy #10 who inherited all the Tapson lands is now classified as a *pauper*: a sorry tale of riches to rags in two generations.

The 1861 census (PRO RG9/1467 Fo. 80) shows Mary's brother living with her:

Launceston Road					
Mary Tapson	*Head*	*Wid*	*72*	*Out pauper*	*Devon, Bridestowe*
William Coombe	*Brother*	*Wid^{r}*	*62*	*Shoemaker*	*„ „*

By 1871 (PRO RG10/2153 Fo. 88) Mary was living alone, the only Tapson still in Bridestowe:

Okehampton Road					
Mary Tapson	*Head*	*Wid*	*82*		*Devon, Bridestowe.*

And by 1881 there were no Tapsons left in the parish.

It was Ann #81, daughter of Nicholas and Mary, who married James Rockey at Bridestowe on 9 October 1842; this is confirmed by the 1881 census for Plymouth St. Anthony (PRO RG11/2195 Fo. 148), although James Rockey seems to have been away from home at the time:

80 Cecil St.					
Ann Rockey	*Wife*	*Mar*	*56*	*Dressmasker*	*Devon, Bridestowe*
Thomas Rockey	*Son*	*Un*	*28(?)*	*Seaman R.N.*	*„ Horrabridge*
William Rockey	*Son*		*17*	*Mason's Labourer*	*„ „*
Henry Rockey	*Son*		*13*	*Scholar*	*„ Plymouth*
Mary Tapson	*Mother*	*Wid*	*92*	*Annuitant*	*„ Sourton*

Horrabridge is in Walkhampton parish, immediately to the north-east of Buckland Monachorum.•

•See Appendix VI (Addenda).

By 1891 Ann Rockey had moved to a new address, but on the night of the census for Plymouth St. Andrew (PRO RG12/1725 Fo. 79), her husband was again away from home, as were the husbands of the other two members of the household:

3 Amity Place

Ann Rockey	*Wife*	*Mar*	*67*	*Living on own means*	*Devon, Bridestowe*
Elizabeth Rockey	*Wife*	*Mar*	*29*	*„ „ „ „*	*„ Stonehouse*
Maria Chiswell	*Wife*	*Mar*	*24*	*Dress Maker*	*„ Brent*

It seems likely that Elizabeth Rockey was Ann's daughter-in-law. Ann's mother, Mary, who was living with Ann in Cecil Street in 1881, had also moved to 3 Amity Place, which was given as her address when she was buried at Ford Park Cemetery:

29 Apr 1883 Mary Tapson 3 Amity Place, Plymouth 94

The extensive Ford Park Cemetery, just to the north of Plymouth railway station, was established in 1848 as *The Plymouth, Devonport & Stonehouse Cemetery Co. Ltd.*, and soon became the main burial ground for the *Three Towns*, as Plymouth, Devonport (page 217) and East Stonehouse came to be known.

The Bridestowe register records the baptism:

31 Jan 1808 Nicholas Tapson son of Margaret Redstone Base Child

Margaret, by naming her child Nicholas Tapson Redstone, showed that she was in no doubt about the father's identity and wished everyone in the village to know that he was a Tapson. Moreover, one suspects that she also named him Nicholas after his father! If so, the father might well have been Nicholas #48, who was to marry Mary Coombe just two years later.•

5.6 EBSWORTHY TAPSON, LABOURER, BRIDESTOWE #76

Civil registration of births, deaths and marriages in England and Wales began on 1 July 1837. At first not all births were registered, but in 1874 penalties were introduced for failure to comply with the law. No burial is permitted without a death certificate. Except in the cities each local registrar's district covers a wide area, typically 20 to 30 parishes. Indexes of births, deaths and marriages covering the whole country are available at the Family Records Centre, London, for each quarter of every year since 1 July 1837; and copies of birth, marriage and death certificates may be purchased there, but at a price (currently £6 for each certificate), so that for the genealogist it is only practical to purchase the occasional certificate when all other sources of investigation have dried up. The indexes provide the information that Mary's death was registered in 1883, Q2 (Plymouth R.D.); her death certificate would give the exact date of death, the cause of death, and her age and address at the time of death. [The abbreviations used here will be employed throughout the following chapters: viz., Q for *Quarter* and R.D. for *Registrar's District*.]

The eldest son of Nicholas and Mary was married at the church of St. George, Exeter:

24 Mar 1837 ***Ebsworthy Tapson*** *of this Parish &* ***Mary Voysey*** *of this Parish by Banns in the presence of William Voysey & Joan Crocker*

Confirmation will appear below that the groom was Ebsworthy #76. After their marriage Ebsworthy and his bride returned to Bridestowe where their first child, Mary, was baptized less than a year later. The 1841 census for Bridestowe (PRO HO107/231/5 Fo. 8) shows that they then had a son John (shown as #90a on the family tree) whose baptism does not appear in the Bridestowe register:

Ebsworthy Tapson	*25-29*	*Quarry Labourer*	*Born in Devonshire*
Mary Tapson	*25-29*		*Born in Devonshire*
Mary Tapson	*2*		*Born in Devonshire*
John Tapson	*6 mo*		*Born in Devonshire*

Mary's birth was registered in 1838, Q1 and John's in 1840, Q3 (both Okehampton R.D.); Mary's age at the time of the census should have been given as 3. Four more children of Ebsworthy and Mary, Anne, Fanny, Susan and Ellen Jane, were subsequently baptized at Bridestowe, where Susan and Fanny were buried on 16 April 1849 and 10 May 1850 respectively.* They were Family Q.

•See Appendix VI (Addenda)

*The tombstone in Bridestowe churchyard for Susan and Fanny is close to the Norman gateway.

The 1851 census for Bridestowe (PRO HO107/1885 Fo. 260) includes their household:

Bridestowe Village

Ebsworthy Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*37*	*Copper miner*	*Devon, Bridestowe*
Mary Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*39*		*„ „*
John Tapson	*Son*		*10*		*„ „*
Ann Tapson	*Dau*		*8*		*„ „*
Ellen J. Tapson	*Dau*		*6 mo*		*„ „*

Ebsworthy should have given his age as 38; his wife, if her age is correctly given, would have been born about 1811; the ages of the children are correctly recorded. However, Mary's name is missing; she was staying at Lamerton with her mother's sister, as is clear from the 1851 census return for that parish (PRO HO107/1884 Fo. 93):

Bold Hey

Thomas Martin	*Head*	*Mar*	*37*	*Farm Labourer*	*Devon, Milton Abbot*
Ann Martin	*Wife*	*Mar*	*35*	*Labourer's Wife*	*„ Bridestowe*
Henry Martin	*Son*		*4*	*Scholar*	*„ Lamerton*
Ann Voysey	*Visitor*	*Wid*	*62*		*„ Bridestowe*
Mary Tapson	*Niece*		*13*	*Scholar*	*„ „*
John Soby	*Lodger*	*Un*	*20*	*Copper Miner*	*„ Northlew*

The marriage of *Thomas Martyn* and *Anne Voizey* was registered in 1841, Q2 (Tavistock R.D.). Ann Voizey must have been a sister of Ebsworthy's wife, Mary, since their daughter Mary is described as Thomas's niece; this fact confirms that it was Ebsworthy Tapson #76 who married Mary Voysey. Mary's age is correctly recorded as 13. [The description *scholar* is always used in the census returns for children of school age.]

In 1853 one more daughter of Ebsworthy and Mary, the second to be named Susan, was baptized at Bridestowe. By the time of the 1861 census the family had moved to Plymouth and are included in the return for Plymouth, St Andrew:

Ebsworthy Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*46*	*Laborer Agricultural*	*Devon, Bridestowe*
Mary Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*47*		*„ Bridestowe*
John Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*20*	*„ „*	*„ Bridestowe*
Ellen J Tapson	*Dau*		*10*		*„ Bridestowe*
Susan Tapson	*Dau*		*8*		*„ Bridestowe*

The 1871 census shows the family living in the parish of Plymouth, Charles the Martyr (PRO RG10/2112 Fo. 47):

2 Teats Hill Road

Ebsworthy Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*57*	*Labourer in Quarry*	*Devon, Bridestowe*
Mary Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*58*	*„ Wife*	*„ „*
Susan Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*18*	*Servant*	*„ „*
Mary Tapson	*G.Dau*		*1*		*Cornwall, Liskeard*

Mary was Susan's illegitimate daughter; her birth was not registered, and there is no baptismal entry for her in the register of the parish church of Liskeard. Susan was married and living in Plymouth by 1881, when she was listed with her family in the return for the parish of Plymouth, Charles the Martyr (PRO RG11/2191 Fo. 51):

3 Penlyn(?) Terrace

John Crocker	*Head*	*Mar*	*29*	*Asst Schoolmaster Seaman RN HM Dockyard*	*Devon, Devonport*
Susan Crocker	*Wife*	*Mar*	*28*		*„ Tavistock*
Maud Rebecca Crocker	*Dau*		*11*	*Scholar*	*Cornwall, Liskeard*
Lilian S. Crocker	*Dau*		*6*	*„*	*Devon, Plymouth*

Maud must have been Susan's illegitimate daughter, named as Mary in the census of 1871. Susan's marriage had been registered in 1872, Q1 (East Stonehouse R.D.), but there is no marriage entry for her in the parish register of St. George, East Stonehouse.

In view of the fact that she already had a child it is probable that Susan's was a registry office wedding; it is not known whether or not her husband, John Crocker, was Maud's father. [St. George was the old parish church of East Stonehouse (page 33); in the Nineteenth Century, in order to cope with the increasing population, two more parishes were carved out of the original parish of East Stonehouse, but not until after Susan's wedding: the parish of St. Paul dates from 1873 and that of St. Matthew from 1876. The Nineteenth Century saw the creation of many new parishes throughout the country, especially in the cities, to which people had been flocking in droves from the countryside.]

Susan's sister Ann was married in the church of Charles the Martyr, Plymouth:

4 Oct 1869	***Samuel Dawson***	*Full*	*Bachelor*	*Mariner*	
			(Father: Richard Dawson, Mariner)		
	Annie Tapson	*Full*	*Spinster*		*3 Garden Street*
			(Father: Ebsworthy Tapson, Labourer)		

by Banns in the presence of R. Evens & Elizabeth A. Weir

The 1871 return for London, Mile End New Town, Stepney All Saints, has the entry:

John Tapson *Boarder* *Un* *25* *Gen[l] Labourer* *Devon, Bridestowe*

Although his age should have been given as 30, this must have been the son of Ebsworthy and Mary, for his marriage is recorded on 23 November 1879 at the Church of St Thomas, Stepney:

23 Nov 1879	***John Tapson***	*35*	*Bachelor*	*Laborer*	*44 Oxford St*
			(Father: Ebsworthy Tapson, Laborer)		
	Sarah Ann Collins	*23*	*Spinster*		*44 Oxford St*
			(Father: James Collins, Gardener)		

in the presence of Charles Jeffery & Mary Ann Leradd....(?)

At the time of his marriage John would have been 39 years old. And he would have been 46 when the death was registered (Mile End R.D.) in 1887, Q1, of *John Tapson, 48*. Just two years later, in 1889, Q1, John's widow, Sarah Ann, married George Dunthorne (Colchester R.D.); they are listed in the 1891 census return for Ipswich, St Matthew:

13 Church Lane

George Dunthorne	*Head*	*Mar*	*42*	*Church Verger*	*Hunts, Standground*
Sarah A Dunthorne	*Wife*	*Mar*	*33*	*Church Attendant*	*Kent, Lee, Blackheath*

Ebsworthy died in 1876; he was buried in Ford Park Cemetery, Plymouth:

15 Jul 1876 *Ebsworthy Tapson* *18 Commercial St. Plymouth* *63*

Ebsworthy's age was correctly recorded. His widow, Mary, was shown in the 1881 census for Plymouth Charles the Martyr (PRO RG11/2191 Fo. 97) to be living with another widow (by the name of Couch) and her family:

8 Amity Place

Mary Tapson	*Head*	*Wid*	*69*	*No occupation*	*Devon, Bridestowe*

Mary died in 1889; she too was buried in Ford Park Cemetery:

17 Nov 1889 *Mary Tapson* *4 Cheltenham Pl Ply (Charles)* *74*

To be consistent with the census returns her age should have been given as 77 or 78.

Mary had died at the home of her youngest daughter, Susan, who was still living at 4 Cheltenham Place at the time of the 1891 census for Plymouth Charles (RG12/1725 Fo 57):

4 Cheltenham Place

John Crocker	*Head*	*Mar*	*39*	*Civil Service Admiralty Branch Schoolmaster Pure & applied Math[cs]*	*Devon, Devonport*
Susan Crocker	*Wife*	*Mar*	*39*	*„*	*Bridestowe*
Maud Crocker	*Dau*	*Un*	*21*	*Student of Painting & Music*	*Cornwall, Liskeard*
Lilian Crocker	*Dau*		*16*	*St of Kindergarten*	*Devon, Plymouth*•

• See Appendix VI (Addenda) & Appendix VII (Further Addenda)

5.7 NICHOLAS TAPSON, YEOMAN, BRIDESTOWE #21

An account has now been given of some of the descendants of Ebsworthy Tapson #10; the sections of this book, in which may be found the investigations of others not yet dealt with, are indicated on the Bridestowe branch of the family tree (facing page 162). We now turn to the successors of Ebsworthy's elder brother, Nicholas #6, who, had he not died before his father, would have inherited Ebsworthy and Blatchford — but not Little Bidlake, which the 1737 marriage settlement (page 134) had already settled on Ebsworthy #10.

When Nicholas #6 died on 29 January 1737/8 at the age of 34 his widow, Margaret, was left with five surviving children: Henry, aged 10; John, 9; Nicholas, 8; Robert, 3; and Anne, not quite one year old. This Anne would have been 18½ when the following marriage entry was made in the Sourton parish register:

6 Oct 1755 ***Roger Ball*** *of this Parish &* ***Ann Tapson*** *of the Parish of Bridestowe by Banns in the presence of Jn° Brooks & Will Pedlar(?)*

That this was the marriage of Nicholas's only daughter, Anne #24, rather than of Anne #14 who would have been 31½ at the time, is not certain, but seems probable because there was already a strong association of Nicholas's branch of the family with Sourton: Anne's brother John had married an Ann Ball at Sourton some six years earlier and John and Ann had had a son baptized there the day before Anne's wedding (page 152).

It must have been the widow of Nicholas #6 who was buried at Bridestowe on 13 April 1779: there was no other Margaret Tapson living in the parish at that time. There is no further entry in the Bridestowe parish register that could refer to the youngest son of Nicholas #6 and Margaret, Robert #23, and no evidence about him elsewhere has so far come to light. As already mentioned (page 136), the eldest son, Henry #19, was probably handicapped and did not marry, but was buried at Bridestowe. And Nicholas #21 remains a somewhat shadowy figure.

However, it must have been this Nicholas #21 whose marriage is recorded in the Lamerton parish register :

2 Feb 1761 ***Nicholas Tapson*** *of the Parish of Bridestow yeoman &* ***Elizabeth Sleman*** *of this Parish Spinster by Banns in the presence of Ebsworthy Tapson & John Gloyen*

Nicholas would then have been just 31, and there was no other Nicholas in Bridestowe to whom this marriage entry could refer. One of the witnesses would have been his uncle, Ebsworthy #10, who had been charged in the 1742 will of Nicholas Tapson Senior with providing for the children of his deceased brother Nicholas. That he was a witness at the wedding suggests that there was a good relationship between uncle and nephew.

Nicholas is described in the marriage entry as a yeoman, so it is probably he who was shown (page 139) in the earliest of the land tax assessments for Bridestowe, that of 1780, as a tenant farmer at *Crospark, Little Bidlak* and *Fenworthy*. His tenancy of Little Bidlake is further evidence of a good relationship between uncle and nephew. Fernworthy, mentioned in the Domesday Book (page 104), is rather more than a mile south of Bidlake. One assumes that Nicholas had already been farming in quite a big way before 1780. However, by 1781 he had given up Little Bidlake, which Ebsworthy Tapson Junior was then farming himself (page 140); by 1782 Nicholas had also gone from Fernworthy; and by 1783 (page 141) from Crospark as well. No doubt he was being forced gradually to reduce his commitments by ill-health, for in 1784 he died; his funeral took place at Bridestowe on 11 April 1784. Nicholas's age was correctly given in the burial entry as 54.

There is no evidence of any children of Nicholas and Elizabeth, nor is there a burial entry for Elizabeth at Bridestowe. However, six months after Nicholas's death the following entry was made in the register of Lamerton, the parish where Nicholas and Elizabeth were married:

27 Oct 1784 Elizabeth Tapson was buried

5.8 JOHN TAPSON, YEOMAN, BRIDESTOWE #20

A marriage recorded in the Sourton parish register:

18 Dec 1749 ***John Tapson & Ann Ball***

was followed five months later by the baptism at Bridestowe of Mary, daughter of John Tapson & Ann. Ebsworthy and Ann, two more children of John and Ann, were baptized at Bridestowe in 1752 and 1754 respectively, after which three baptisms were recorded in the Sourton parish register:

5 Oct 1755	*Nicholas*	*son of John Tapson & Ann*	[#43a on the family tree]
30 Jan 1757	*Dionisia*	*dau of John Tapson & Ann*	[#43b on the family tree]
11 Jun 1758	*John*	*son of John Tapson & Ann*	[#43c on the family tree]

The remaining four children of John and Ann were baptized at Bridestowe: Robert in 1760, William in 1761, George in 1765 (he was buried five months later), and another George in 1768.

John #20 was the only John Tapson in Bridestowe to whom these parish register entries could apply, the father of Family G, and it can only be the same John who was listed in the 1780 land tax assessment for Bridestowe as a tenant farmer at Denbole Park, Tanner's Meadow and, jointly with John Newton, at Rectory Farm (page 139). John had given up his share of Rectory Farm by 1781, but continued to farm Denbole Park and Tannner's Meadow (page 140). By 1786 John had also taken on the tenancy of another unnamed tenement, probably North Ball Bridhays named in the 1787 assessment, which by 1788 he had exchanged for Standon (page 142).

In 1789 and 1790 John still held Standon and Tanner's Meadow, but it was clearly his son William who was farming Denbole Park; William had given up Denbole Park by 1791, but John remained as occupier of Standon and Tanner's Meadow. From 1792 to 1795 John continued to farm Standon, but Tanner's Meadow was then in the occupation of George Tapson, John's youngest son. After 1795 John and George relinquished their leases on these properties, and by 1796 John had entered into a lease on land in Lydford, as is seen from the 1796 land tax assessment for that parish:

Mr John Newton	*John Tapson*	*Lower Downtown*	*2*	*4*	*0*

John Newton, the proprietor, may have been John's partner in 1780 at Rectory Farm, Bridestowe.

This is the first year that a Tapson appears in the assessments for Lydford, the parish immediately to the south-east of Bridestowe parish (page 135). Before the Conquest one of the principal towns of Devon, the village of Lydford is now best known for the scenic gorge just to its south, cut deep by the river Lyd, and for the ruins of its Norman castle. The hamlet of Downtown is immediately to the north of the village of Lydford and very close to the boundary with Bridestowe parish. The land tax assessments, dating from 1780, show that the Downtown estate was at that time divided into four tenements: Higher Downtown, Middle Downtown, Lower Downtown (which John was renting in 1796) and Saunders' Downtown. By 1797 John had increased his holding in Lydford:

Lydford Land Tax Assessment 1797

Mr John Newton	*John Tapson*	*Lower Downtown*	*2*	*4*	*0*
Calmady Esqr	*Do*	*Sanders Downtown*	*0*	*18*	*8*

Lydford Land Tax Assessment 1798

Mr John Newton	*John Tapson*	*Lower Downtown*	*2*	*4*	*0*
The Heirs of Calmady Esq	*George Tapson*	*Sanders Downtown*	*0*	*18*	*0*

George's name appears here for the first time in the Lydford assessments, but he seems to have moved to that parish at the same time as his father (page 154), perhaps working for two years on the land which his father was renting there. By 1799 George was the only Tapson farming at Lydford; John, who would have been 70 in 1798, had clearly retired. John's wife had died five years earlier: the burial on 1 January 1793 recorded in the Bridestowe parish register must have been hers; she would have been born about 1725.

It is interesting that, during the period when his cousin Ebsworthy was having to sell his inheritance in order to pay off his debts, John, to judge from the rateable values, was increasing his holdings, albeit rented. If his father had not died prematurely the Tapson story might have been quite different, for John, as the second son, would probably have been the heir to Ebsworthy and Blatchford, the eldest son, Henry, seemingly being handicapped and not capable of running the farms.

John was buried at Bridestowe on 10 April 1805; his age, 76, is accurately recorded in the burial entry. John's will, proved in the Archidiaconal Court of Totnes, was destroyed in the extensive bombing of Exeter during the Second World War; however, an abstract of the will appears in the Death Duty Register which covers probate records of that court (PRO IR26/342 Will 178). [Death Duty has been payable since the Legacy Duty Act of 1796. Until 1805 duty was payable on legacies from and residues of personal estate worth £20 or more, but spouse, children, parents and grandparents of the deceased were exempt; between 1805 and 1815 everyone except spouse and parents paid this duty, and real estate sold to raise such legacies or residues was also included; from 1815 to 1853 exemption was granted only to the spouse; after 1853 duty became payable on personal and real estate of estates worth over £100, again with only the spouse being exempt.]

The Will of John Tapson (Inland Revenue Abstract)

Date Sworn:	*29 April 1805*
Sum Sworn:	*Under £200*
Testator:	*John Tapson of Stoke Damerel*
Executor:	*George Tapson, Sole Executor*
Legatees:	*Wm Ball of Bridistow (In Trust for his Daughter Mary Ball seperate from her Husband All his Household Furniture)*
	William Ball, Son in Law (£40 In Trust also for his Daughter Mary Ball seperate from her Husband)
	George Tapson, Son, Residuary Legatee (All the Residue and Remainder of his Goods and Chattles)

The date of this entry in the Death Duty Register is just 19 days after John's burial at Bridestowe. It is not known whether John made his will whilst on a visit to Stoke Damerel, where his eldest son, Ebsworthy, was living (page 218), or whether he had moved there after his retirement to live, his body, when he died, being taken back to Bridestowe for burial. The executor and residuary legatee was John's youngest son, George.

Because the same small number of forenames are used repeatedly, it is often difficult to identify with certainty any particular individual. This is especially so for a Tapson bride named in a marriage entry, since she will then change her surname and thus make any search for clues to her identity in the years following her marriage extremely difficult. Nor do the names of the witnesses to the marriage help in most cases, unless a witness appears at a wedding in a parish in which he does not normally reside: for witnesses were often churchwardens, or just people who were available to attend the marriage ceremony and, as an extra qualification not always met, able to sign their names. So it is that in the parish registers the same names occur over and over again as witnesses.

Thus, although it seems fairly certain that it was John's daughter Ann who married Ebsworthy Tapson Junior at Bridestowe on 23 November 1778 (pages 141, 146), it is not possible to be absolutely positive about this. However, it is beyond doubt that the *Dianisha Tapson* who married William Ball at Bridestowe on 12 April 1779 was John's daughter Dionisia (page 152); this Dionisia would have been 22 at the time of the wedding and, apart from the wife of Ebsworthy Tapson Senior, the only Dionisia Tapson living in Bridestowe at that time; moreover, the groom, William Ball, was named as his son-in-law in John's will. Since William was trustee for legacies to John's daughter Mary Ball, we can conclude that the marriage at Bridestowe on 9 February 1773 was that of John's daughter Mary, then 22, to George Ball, though it is not clear why she was described as a sojourner.

5.9 GEORGE TAPSON, FARMER, BRIDESTOWE #47

George, the youngest son of John Tapson #20 and the father of Family M, was 21 at the time of his marriage in the parish church of Kelly, about nine miles south-west of Bridestowe:

23 Dec 1789 ***George Tapson*** *of the Parish of Bridistow &* ***Mary Mason*** *of this Parish by Banns in the presence of John Mason & William Rundle*

It was well over two years later, on 12 April 1792, before their first two children, Maria and John, were baptized at Bridestowe, so it is not certain whether they were twins or whether one had been born earlier but not immediately baptized.

A list dated 2 September 1793 (DRO Q/S 62/7A/1) of publicans' licences for the *Division and Hundred of Lifton* confirms a *George Tapson* as licensee of the White Hart at Bridestowe. Since there was no other George Tapson living in Bridestowe (unless he was a sojourner who has left no other trace of his presence in that parish) it would seem that the licensee was #47. This is the earliest document of its kind to have survived, so it is quite likely that George was already, by 1793, licensee of the White Hart and was applying for the annual renewal of his licence; this he did again in 1794 (DRO Q/S 62/7A/2), but for the last time. The edition of the *Bury & Norwich Post* dated 19 February 1794 and printed in Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, carried the item:

> *Mr George Tapson, innholder, of Bridestow, Somersetshire, on a Second examination, has been honourably acquitted of the charge of waggon-robbing, with which he was maliciously accused.*

One wonders how the contributor to the East Anglian newspaper got hold of this information, which can have held absolutely no interest for its readers in Norfolk or Suffolk. Unfortunately the court at which the case was heard is not mentioned.

In 1792 George took over from his father the tenancy of Tanner's Meadow (page 142), which he held for four years, during which time two more of his children were baptized at Bridestowe, Thomas in 1793 and William in 1795. By 1796 George's father was renting Lower Downtown in Lydford (page 152); George must have moved there at the same time, probably to work on his father's newly-acquired land, for the baptisms of his next two sons are recorded in the Lydford parish register:

2 Apr 1797 Ebsworthy son of George & Mary Tapson [#72a on the family tree]
28 Feb 1799 Robert son of George & Mary Tapson [#72b on the family tree]

George took over the lease of Saunders' Downtown from his father in 1798, the year before John retired (page 152). The Lydford land tax assessments of 1799 through to 1805 show that George was continuing to rent *Sanders Downtown*.

Although farming at Lydford, George and Mary had their next two children baptized at Bridestowe, Anne in 1801 and Joseph in 1803; but the baptism of their last child was at Lydford:

29 Apr 1806 Mary dau of George & Mary Tapson [#74a on the family tree]

And it was in 1806 that George's name once again appeared in the list of publicans' licences for the *Division and Hundred of Lifton*, this time as licensee of the Dartmoor Inn in Lydford. His *Surety* was given as *Self & Robert Tapson*; Robert was probably his brother, #44. In the same year George also expanded his holdings in Lydford:

Lydford Land Tax Assessment 1806

The Heirs of Calmady Esq	*George Tapson*	*Sander's Downtown*	*0*	*18*	*8*
Walter Radcliffe Esq	*George Tapson*	*Luxmoor*	*1*	*3*	*4*

George continued to renew his licence as innkeeper of the Dartmoor Inn, but Robert was not again named as a surety. George still retained his lease on Saunders' Downtown and Luxmoor, and in 1807, 1808 and 1809 he also rented *Friends tenement* from Walter Radcliffe. Although by 1812, to judge from the lower assessment, his holding at Luxmoor had been reduced, George had acquired another small parcel of land:

Lydford Land Tax Assessment 1812

The Heirs of Calmady Esq	*George Tapson*	*Sanders Downtown*	*0*	*18*	*8*
Walter Radcliffe Esq	*George Tapson*	*Luxmore*	*1*	*0*	*5*
Richard Friend	*George Tapson*	*Part of Higher Downtown*	*0*	*3*	*6*

George continued to farm these properties until 1815, but by 1816 they had been taken over by his son Thomas (page 304); and in 1814 George renewed his licence as innkeeper of the Dartmoor Inn for the last time. It is not clear whether George, who would have been nearly 48 years old by the end of 1815, remained for a time in Lydford, or whether he and Mary immediately moved away. However, when their eldest daughter, Maria, was buried at Bridestowe on 6 November 1817 her address was entered in the Bridestowe parish register as *Lidford* and her age was given as 26.

The 1841 census return for Lamerton (PRO HO107/232/1 Fo. 11) shows George and his wife living in North Brentor, a hamlet within the parish of Lamerton (not to be confused with the neighbouring parish of Brentor):

George Tapson	*70-74*	*Pauper*	*Born in Devonshire*
Mary Tapson	*70-74*		*Born in Devonshire*

In a letter Mrs. Pauline Johnson, the Superintendent Registrar at Tavistock, reports that the death certificate for *George Tapson of North Brentor, Lamerton*, states that he died of *fits* on 17 April 1842 at *Mill, Coryton*, and that the death certificate for *Mary Tapson of Coryhill, Coryton*, records that she was the widow of George Tapson, a farmer, and died on 21 January 1849 of *natural infirmities. George Tapson of Brentor, aged 75* was buried at Bridestowe on 20 April 1842; he would have been in his 75th year. *Mary Tapson of Coryton, aged 82* was buried at Bridestowe on 24 January 1849.*

The 1851 census for the parish of St. James in the City of Westminster (PRO HO107/1484 Fo. 255) lists the household of Mr. Prescott, who seems to have been away from home at the time of the census:

16 St. James Square

Mary Tapson	*Serv*	*Un*	*37*	*Serv to Mr Prescott*	*Devon, Lydford*
Sarah Algar	*Serv*	*Un*	*24*	*Serv to Mr Prescott*	*Essex, Hatfield Peverel*

This Mary Tapson must have been the daughter of George and Mary, although she would have been just about 45 at the time. St. James Square is off Pall Mall, where her brother Joseph was then licensee of the *Bell* public house (page 327), so Joseph had probably found her a position nearby when she decided to move to London. Soon after the census Mary was married in the City of Westminster church of St. George, Hanover Square (CWAC):

22 Jun 1851	***Thomas Sharland***	*Full*	*Widower*	*Farmer*	*Bond Street*
			(Father: John Sharland, Farmer)		
	Mary Tapson	*Full*	*Spinster*	*—*	*Bond Street*
			(Father: George Tapson, Farmer)		

by Banns in the presence of John Bamsey & Mary Ann Worden

[*Full* in the marriage entries in the parish registers means *of full age*.]

Now that we know the details of the marriage of Mary #74a, we can deduce that the Mary Tapson who married Jacob Gerry at Bridestowe on 21 September 1831 was Mary #75; one of the witnesses at the wedding was her father, Nicholas. Then nearly 21, she was almost five years younger than #74a. In 1842 Jacob was one of the witnesses at the marriage of Mary's sister Anne to James Rockey (page 128). The Gerrys were still living in Bridestowe at the time of the 1851 census for that parish (PRO HO107/1885 Fo. 291), but Mary's age should have been recorded as 40:

Woodfordham

Jacob Gerry	*Head*	*Mar*	*42*	*Searcher for Mines*	*Devon, Bridestowe*
Mary Gerry	*Wife*	*Mar*	*43*		*„ „*
Mary Gerry	*Dau*	*Un*	*5*		*„ „*
Jacob Gerry	*Son*		*2*		*„ „*

*See Appendix VI (Addenda).

5.10 WILLIAM TAPSON, BUTCHER, BRIDESTOWE #45

John's son William, the father of Family K, was 22 when he married at Sourton:

24 May 1784 ***William Tapson & Grace Rice*** *both sojourners of this Parish by Banns in the presence of P Brook & John Rice*

The children of William and Grace were all baptized at Bridestowe, the first on 16 September 1784, and it was at Bridstowe that their infant son Robert was buried on 15 November 1801. For the two years 1789 and 1790 William took over the lease of Denbole Park from his father (page 142), but his main occupation was that of a butcher, as we learn from the abstract of his will in the Death Duty Register (PRO IR26/343 Will 809):

The Will of William Tapson (Inland Revenue Abstract)

Date of Probate:	*22 May 1811*
Sum Sworn:	*Under £200*
Name of Testator:	*Wm Tapson of Bridestow, Butcher*
Executrix:	*Grace Tapson, Sole Executrix*
Legatees:	*William Tapson, Son (£30 to be paid him three Years next after the Death of Testator)*
	Grace Tapson, Wife, Residuary Legatee (All the Rest and Residue of his Estate Goods Chattles Ready Money and Securities for Money or Effects whatsoever)

William's burial at Bridestowe, on 8 May 1811, had taken place just 14 days before this grant of probate. He was interred close to the grave of his grandfather, Nicholas #6, (page135); his headstone (next to the church, second row in from the path) reads:

Sacred to the memory of WILLIAM TAPSON of this parish
who departed this life ye 5th day of May 1811 Aged 50 Years
Just in the Flower of my age
God took me from this Earthly Stage
Ive left my Wife and Children dear
Unto the God of Israels care
To whom I trust that he will Bless
The Widow and the Fatherless

William was in his 50th year when he died, and his widow was left with three young boys of 5, 8 and 12 to bring up. Thomas Rice was 14 at the time and on the point of earning his own living, and probably William, then 19, and the three girls would already have been in employment or married. Mary would have been 22 when a Mary Tapson married Thomas Palmer at Bridestowe on 31 December 1806, and Grace would have been 21 when a Grace Tapson married William Brock in the same church on 6 June 1808; William Tapson was a witness at both weddings, so it is practically certain that the two brides were his daughters. William's widow, Grace, was buried at Bridestowe on 25 August 1822; her age was given as 59.

Anne did not marry until long after her parents' deaths: her wedding at Bridestowe to Roger Northcott took place on 8 October 1840 when she would have been nearly 46; that this was her wedding is confirmed by the naming of *William Tapson, butcher* as her father, and by the 1851 census for Thrushelton (PRO HO107/1884 Fo. 378), which gives her place of birth and her exact age:

Buscott

Roger Northcott	*Head*	*Mar*	*58*	*Farmer 57 acres employing 2 laborers*	*Devon, Thrushelton*
Ann Northcott	*Wife*	*Mar*	*56*		*„ Bridestowe*
John Northcott	*Serv*		*11*	*Ag Lab*	*„ „*

together with two more servants (a *farm labourer* and a *house servant*) and a visitor.

5.11 WILLIAM TAPSON, SCHOOLMASTER, BRIDESTOWE #61

The marriage is recorded in the parish register of Holsworthy, a market town about 14 miles north-west of Bridestowe:

24 Sep 1818 ***William Tapson*** *schoolmaster of the parish of Bridestowe &*
Elizabeth Holl Wonnacott *spinster of this parish by Banns*
in the presence of John Wonnacott & Grace Brock

The three children of William and Elizabeth Holl were baptized at Bridestowe in 1820, 1822 and 1824.

Two cousins named William Tapson were born in Bridestowe just four years apart, #61 and #72, either of whom might have been the groom at this wedding. However, the Bridestowe parish register records the age of a William Tapson buried there on 12 April 1825 as 33, which was precisely the age on that date of #61, the eldest son of William Tapson #45. His grave is close to that of his father, and his headstone has the inscription:

Sacred to the memory of WILLIAM TAPSON of this parish
who departed this life the 8th day of April 1825
Triumphing in the faith of Christ Aged 33 years
A much lamented Friend lies here
A tender Husband and Parent dear

The inscription informs us that this William had been living in Bridestowe and that he was married and had children; since only one William Tapson had been having children baptized at Bridestowe during this period, we can safely conclude that it was William #61 who married at Holsworthy in 1818. [It will be shown later (page 315) that William's cousin #72 was married in 1819 at Shaugh Prior, a parish to the south-east of Buckland Monachorum.]•

One surmises that William may have been the schoolmaster at the Bridestowe village school. Unfortunately, neither the vestry minutes nor the records of the overseers of the poor for that parish prior to 1829 have survived, by which time William was already dead: these are the only documents in which school matters are likely to have been recorded. However, see §5.12 below.

5.12 THE BRIDESTOWE TAPSONS AND THEIR CHURCH

The Tapsons of Bridestowe were active members of their parish church; fairly regularly one of the two witnesses at a wedding was a Tapson, and sometimes both were Tapsons. Robert Tapson was often a witness from about 1754 to 1781, almost certainly #2 who died in 1783; John Tapson frequently from about 1766 to 1796, unquestionably #20 who moved to Lydford in 1796; William Tapson between 1786 and 1802, indisputably #45 who died in 1811, and on one occasion, in 1802, the second witness was his wife, Grace Tapson; Nicholas Tapson in 1780, either #21 or #43a; George Tapson in 1789, 1791 and 1793, who must have been #47; and William Tapson at most marriages from 1814 to 27 January 1825, certainly #61 who died on 8 April 1825. Evidence of this William's continuing presence in Bridestowe almost up to the time of his death makes it very likely that he was the schoolmaster of that village by 1814; the 1818 marriage entry describes him as a schoolmaster (see §5.11, above).

One does not know whether these Tapsons performed the rôle of witness because they were churchwardens or merely because they were available and could write (or at least sign their names). The Tapsons certainly did serve from time to time as churchwardens, as we know from the annual returns of the bishop's transcripts; these were normally signed by the rector, but occasionally by the two churchwardens. In 1746 and 1747 one of the signatories was Ebsworthy Tapson, who must have been Ebsworthy #10; in 1781 and 1782 one was again Ebsworthy Tapson, either the same Ebsworthy, who died in 1784, or his son #31. In 1797 one of the signatories was John Tapson, who must have been #20, although by this time he had recently moved to Lydford.

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

5.13 ROBERT TAPSON, YEOMAN, BRIDESTOWE #44

John's son Robert married Jane Keen at Bridestowe on 17 July 1781; he would have been 21 at the time. Their daughter, Jenny, was baptized at Bridestowe on 16 October 1785 (her mother's name also was recorded in the parish register as *Jenny*) and buried on 5 October 1786. There are no further baptismal entries at Bridestowe for children of Robert and Jane. However, two infants, William and John, were buried in 1789 and 1790 respectively, for neither of whom has a baptismal entry been found: either or both of these infants could have been children of Robert and Jane; if not, they were probably children of one or other of Robert's brothers William and George, since these three brothers were the only Tapsons, apart from Ebsworthy #31, raising families in Bridestowe during this period. [Their brother Nicholas was living in Tavistock, though he was bringing some of his children back to Bridestowe for burial (page 267).]

There is no evidence to show that Robert #13 or Robert #23 remained in Bridestowe, so it was probably Robert #44 who was listed in the land tax assessments for the parish from 1783 to 1793 inclusive as the occupier of Higher Waterleats (pages 141-143). Sometime after 1793 Robert and Jane moved to St. Germans, in Cornwall, where Robert's brother John had been schoolmaster until his death in 1792 (page 235) and where John's widow and children continued to live. Most of the Cornish land tax assessments have been destroyed; the only one which survives for St. Germans is of uncertain date, but is thought to be of about 1800, and it contains no reference to Robert Tapson. However, explanatory notes to a plan of St. Germans dated 1831 (CRO DDP68/28/2, 3) have the entry:

Number	*Tenement*	*Quantity*	*Tenant*
159	*Slaughter House & Garden Behind*	*.. .. 22*	*R^t Brickwood Jun^r & R^t Tapson*

Quantity signifies the area in acres, roods and square poles. [40 sq. poles = 1 rood, 4 roods = 1 acre; so 22 sq. poles would be just over ⅛ acre.] It is a possibility that Robert, like his younger brother William (page 156), had moved into the butchery trade. Robert Brickwood Junior was the son of John's successor as schoolmaster (page 235); their property was situated in the southern part of town.

Jane Tapson of St. Germans, aged 76 was buried at Bridestowe on 23 June 1832. When a former churchwarden made a record of surviving headstones a few decades ago, there was one for Jane; this has since apparently been destroyed by vandals, from whose attentions this peaceful little village does not entirely escape. Today the only Tapson memorials remaining in the churchyard at Bridestowe are the headstones of Nicholas #6, William #45, and his son William #61, as already described. Sadly, Nicholas's headstone is in quite a fragile condition and the other two are loosely fixed into the ground, all easy targets for desecration by hooligans.

It seems that Robert remarried; an entry in the parish register of Stoke Damerel, where the widow of his deceased brother Ebsworthy was still living (page 219), reads:

20 Jan 1835 ***Robert Tapson*** *of the Parish of St. German's in the County of Cornwall*
Widower & ***Mary Ann Pawlin*** *of the Parish, a Spinster*
by Licence in the presence of Geo. Nettle & Priscilla Pawlin

Robert would have been 74 at the time of this marriage, just two and a half years after the death of his first wife; there is no evidence of any other Robert Tapson living in St. Germans at the time, especially one who was a widower, so it seems almost beyond doubt that the groom was #44.

Robert was buried at St. Germans, where the parish register gives his correct age:

24 Nov 1838 Robert Tapson Age 78

And it must surely have been Robert's widow who remarried, again at Stoke Damerel, within two years of Robert's death, her father's name *Pallin* being phonetically identical to her maiden name *Pawlin:*

2 Nov 1840	***William Skinner***	*Full*	*Bach*	*Saddler*	*15 Cherry Garden St*
			(Father: William Skinner, Cordwainer)		
	Mary Ann Tapson	*Full*	*Widow*		*15 Cherry Garden St*
			(Father: John Pallin, Farmer)		

in the presence of Francis Hooff(?) & Geo Nettle

5.14 THE DESCENDANTS OF ROBERT TAPSON, FATHER OF FAMILY A

The baptisms at Bridestowe of the children of Robert and Ann, Family A, were preceded by the marriage at Hittisleigh, beyond Okehampton some 14 miles from Bridestowe:

4 Oct 1697 ***Robert Tapson*** *&* ***Anne Hicks*** *both of Briddestow*

If the burial of a Robert Tapson on 18 November 1740 has been correctly assigned to the youngest son of Nicholas Tapson Senior, Robert #12, on the grounds that he was not mentioned in the 1742 will (page 136), then the father of Family A must have been buried on 15 March 1715/6.

Robert's youngest son, William #4, moved away from Bridestowe, eventually settling in Stowford (page 166). His eldest daughter, Ann #1, would have been 29 when an Anne Tapson married John Hockaday at Bridestowe on 11 October 1727; Ann #1 was probably the bride (unless her widowed mother was remarrying), since the only other unmarried Ann Tapson living in Bridestowe at that time, Ann #8, is known to have married William Coombe four years later (page 136). One of the two burials of an Anne Tapson, in July 1734 and in January 1736/7, was probably that of Robert's widow. And Robert's eldest son, Robert #2, was 22 when he married Orange Bolt at Bridestowe on 21 August 1721; Robert and Orange were the parents of Family C. Robert #2 was buried on 26 October 1783; his age is correctly recorded in the burial entry. His wife (for there was no other Orange Tapson) had been buried nearly 20 years earlier, on 20 March 1764.

It was probably Miriam #16, a daughter of Robert and Orange, who married at Marystowe, about 7 miles south-west of Bridestowe village:

18 Apr 1748 ***John Skelly*** *&* ***Miriam Tapson*** *by banns*

Miriam would have been nearly 20 at the time. And William Tapson who married Susanna Redecliff at Bridestowe on 28 November 1746 must have been William #15, the second son of Robert and Orange, who was marrying at the age of 20. This William and Susanna were the parents of Family F. *William, the son of William Tapson*, buried on 9 November 1759, must have been the eldest son of William and Susanna, for another son named William was baptized on 21 April 1765; this second William was buried on 16 July 1765. William #15 was 60 when *William Tapson, aged 61* was buried on 20 January 1786. And the Susanna Tapson buried on 2 July 1767 was probably William's wife, though she could have been their daughter Susanna #33 who would, however, have been 30 when a Susanna Tapson was married at Coryton, about 5 miles south-west of Bridestowe:

6 Jul 1782 ***John Rowe*** *of this Parish &* ***Susanna Tapson*** *of this Parish*
by Banns in the presence of Hugh Hamley & James Martyn

Elizabeth, mother of the single-parent family I, is unlikely to have been #18, succumbing to temptation at age 45; she must have been #34, having her *base child*, John #57, when she was 24. It was surely this John who was the apprentice named in a report to the Devon Quarter Sessions (DRO QS1/21 Page 239) dated *Michaelmas Sessions 1788*:

Motion to discharge an Indictment against Robert Tapson Rejected

Mr Fanshawe having moved this Court to Discharge an Indictment against Robert Tapson of the Parish of Bridestowe for an Assault on John Tapson his Parish Apprentice on a Release from the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor of the said Parish of the Prosecutor.

The Court reject the said Motion and order that the Churchwardens and Overseers of the said Parish prosecute the said Indictment with effect.

The case was brought up again at the next Quarter Sessions (DRO QS1/21 Page 244) in a report dated *Epiphany Sessions 1789*:

Robert Tapson to be Discharged from John Tapson his Apprentice

Upon an Application unto this Court by Robert Tapson of the Parish of Bridestow in this County to be Discharged from John Tapson his Apprentice This Court by and with the consent of the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor of the said Parish of Bridestow and on the said Robert Tapson agreeing to take another Apprentice in the place of the said John Tapson doth Discharge the said Robert Tapson from his said Apprentice and Indenture and he is hereby Discharged accordingly.

Churchwardens and overseers of the poor, with the consent of two justices of the peace, were empowered, by the *Statute of Labourers and Apprentices* of 1563 and the *Poor Law Act* of 1601, to apprentice children under 16, whose parents they judged not able to maintain them, to a trade or husbandry if a boy or to housewifery if a girl. Masters failing to provide for an apprentice or to carry out the conditions of the indenture could be fined by justices of the peace, with appeal to Quarter Sessions. Such an apprentice was known as a *Poor Apprentice* or *Parish Apprentice*, as distinct from a *Trade Apprentice*, and was often little more than a servant.

With both her parents dead Elizabeth was no doubt unable to provide a home for her son, who would have been 6 years old when her father died in 1786; so at some time before Michaelmas 1788, by which date John would have been 9 years old, the duty of providing him with *Meat, Drink, Apparel, Lodging, Washing, and all other things necessary and fit for an Apprentice* (page 170) fell to Robert Tapson. The only Robert Tapson known to have been living in Bridestowe at that time was #44, who was farming Higher Waterleats (page 158). It is understandable that Robert may have resented having to care for someone else's child, particularly since he was unable to have a family of his own; and at that tender age John would not have been capable of doing much to earn his keep, even if he was cooperative. John would certainly have been placed with another master after Robert obtained a discharge from him in the Epiphany Sessions of 1789, and his mother, Elizabeth, free of the burden of looking after her bastard child, was probably the bride when an Elizabeth Tapson married Edward Bickle at Bridestowe on 24 February 1789; she would have been 33 at the time (although the bride might just possibly have been her aunt, Elizabeth #18, then 55).

5.15 THE MISSING LINKS

So far no consideration has been given to the identity of the progenitors of the two branches of the Bridestowe family, Robert the father of Family A and Nicholas the father of Family B. After the marriage of Nicholas and Agnes in 1632/3 surviving documentary evidence about the Tapsons of Bridestowe is fragmentary until existing registers for that parish begin in 1696. This Nicholas was living in Bridestowe and was a tax-payer at the time of the 1640-1 subsidies and probably at the time of the 1663-4 subsidies (page 115), so he clearly made the marriage settlement payments, the last of which was due on 29 October 1641. After his death the properties would in all probability have passed to his son Robert who was baptized in Buckland Monachorum on 3 Feburary 1635/6 (page 111).

Bishop's transcripts for Bridestowe subsequent to the marriage of Nicholas and Agnes survive for 1641, 63, 64, 66, 68-72, 74-76, 78, 79 (fragment), 80, 81, 86, 90? and 95; Tapson entries are:

20 Jan 1663 Robert the sonne of Robert Tapson and of Katherine his wife was baptized
15 Apr 1668 Nicholas the sonne of Robert Tapson and of Katherine his wife was baptized
2 Aug 1676 Agnes the daughter of Robert Tapson and of Katherine his wife was baptized
7 Feb 1679 Agnis Tapson was buryed
18 Feb 1690? Agnes Tapson was buryed
23 Oct 1695 Robert Tapson buried

On the assumption that these entries refer to the Robert Tapson born in 1635/6, he would have been 27, 32 and 40 when the three children mentioned in these bishop's transcripts were baptized and 59 when he was buried. The other two burials must refer to his mother and his daughter. The bishop's transcript of 1671, which records the burial of *Alexander Ebsworthie* (page 115), was signed by *Robert Tapson, churchwarden*, the only surviving occurrence of his signature. Robert paid hearth tax on two chimneys in 1674 (page 20), and the manor court roll of the court leet for the Forest of Dartmoor held on 15 May 1685 (WDRO 70/286) lists, among the jurors, *Robert Tapson of Bridistow*. Among the bishop's transcripts which survive for Sourton prior to the earliest extant registers for that parish, in which the family property of Blatchford was situated, that of 1670 records the baptism:

20 Dec 1670 Henry son of Robert Tapson

Henry might well have been another son of the same Robert, since the Tapsons of Bratton Clovelly did not purchase their properties in Sourton until February 1672/3 (page 86).

Just before they were destroyed by enemy action Miss Olive Moger made abstracts of Court Bundles of the Consistory Court of the Bishop of Exeter; one from Bundle 114 (DRO) reads:

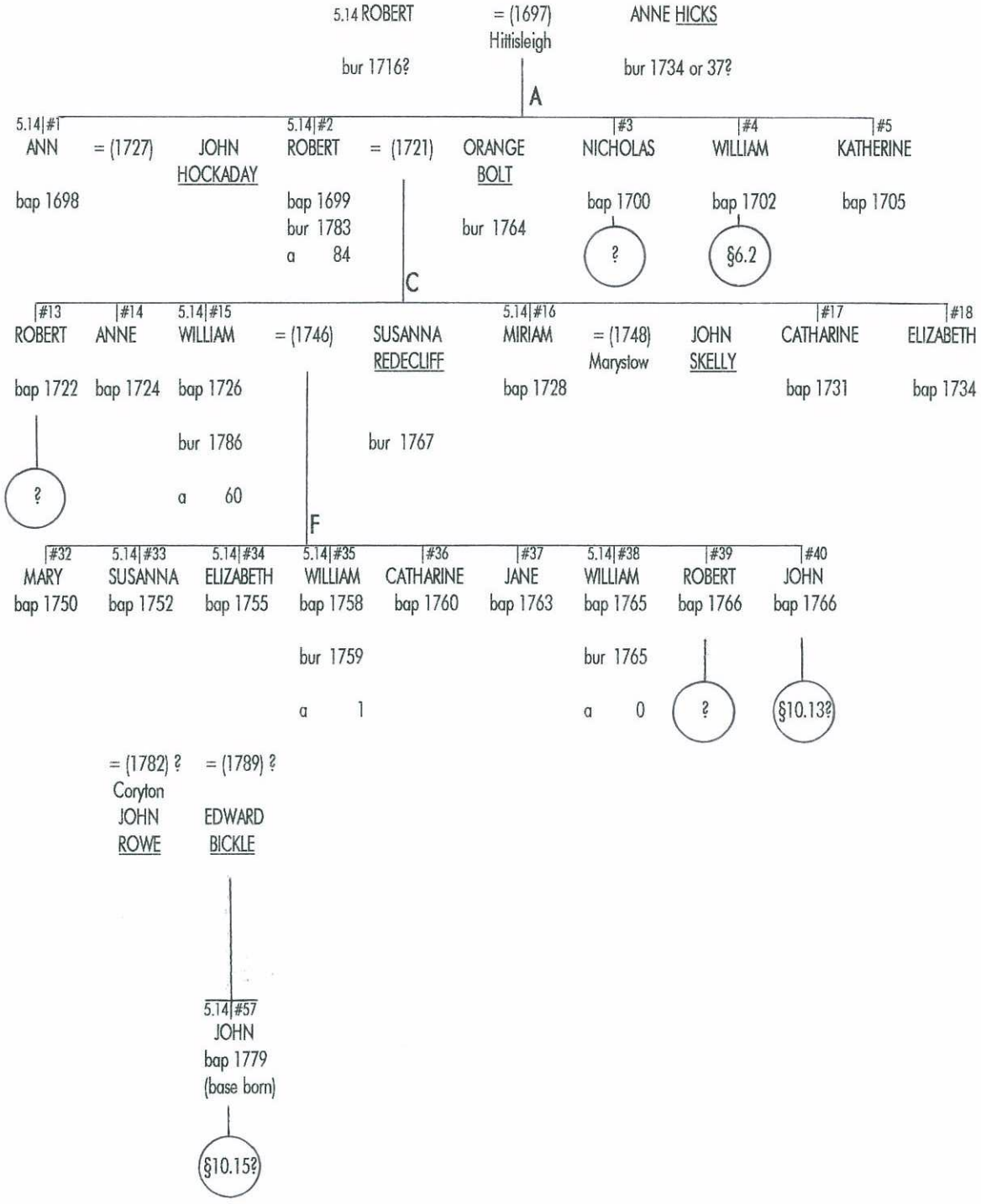
> *Citation of Ebsworthy Tapson and Nicholas Tapson, Sons and Ex^rs of Will of Robert Tapson late of Bridestowe, dec^d, who while he lived was ex^r of Will of Agnes Tapson late of same, dec^d, to answer Robert Backer(?) a legatee in Will of Agnes Tapson, dec^d, in cause of subtraction of legacy. Dated 8 Oct 1696. Served at Bridestowe.*

This item is dated to the year after the death of Robert Tapson. Since it is unlikely that his daughter made a will, being only 14 even if hers was the later burial of an Agnes, Robert must have been the executor of his mother's will. That this will was still being contested in 1696 suggests that it was Robert's mother, Nicholas's wife, who was buried on 18 February 1690/1. [Agnes's parents were married on 28 January 1610/1 (page 108), so even if she had been born immediately she would have been only 80 on 18 February 1690/1 — therefore she was probably in her 70's when she died.]

One would expect Ebsworthy and Nicholas, as executors of Robert's will, to have been his eldest surviving sons; it is therefore possible that his son Robert, born before Nicholas, had died. Clearly Ebsworthy and Nicholas were still alive in 1696, and this is also the date from which the earliest Bridestowe parish register survives. This register has burial entries for *Ebsworthy Tapson* on 5 January 1706/7 and 23 February 1707/8. One of these entries must refer to the second child of Nicholas the father of Family B (page 134); the other probably refers to Ebsworthy the son of Robert, dying in his late forties — the very first Ebsworthy Tapson. And the *M^rs Catherine Tapson* buried on 5 May 1710 may well have been his mother, Robert's widow and a person of some consequence.

The Bridestowe assessments for the Devon Militia dated 12 August 1698 *for a quarterly pole of one year by vertue of Act of parlament made in the ninth and tenth year of his Majesty's Reign* (DRO Z1/43/4/5) levy a rate of 4 shillings each on, among others, *Ebsworthy Tapson* and *Nicholis Tapson*. This *Nicholis*, who was living in Bridestowe in 1698, must have been the Nicholas who married in 1703, the father of Family B. If he was Ebsworthy's brother, the Nicholas baptized in 1668, he would have married at the age of 35, had his last child when he was 52, and lived to be 82; and, since he inherited the Tapson lands, he would either have been the eldest (surviving) son of Robert and Katherine or he would have come into his inheritance after Ebsworthy (who may have been the eldest son because he is mentioned first in the Citation) died in 1707 or 1708, presumably without issue. If, however, the father of Family B was Ebsworthy's son then, since no further entry in the Bridestowe parish register could refer to Ebsworthy's brother Nicholas, it must be assumed that the latter moved away from the parish, although to date no evidence has come from any other parish to support that suggestion. Moreover, in this case there would be only 68 years between the baptism of Robert on 3 February 1635/6 and that of Nicholas #6 on 20 January 1703/4, so allowing an average of less than 23 years for each of the three generations — quite possible, but less likely. So on balance it seems more plausible that Nicholas, the father of Family B, was Ebsworthy's brother.

The identity of the father of Family A is even more difficult to determine. If he was the Robert, son of Robert and Katherine, baptized on 20 January 1663, then he would have married at the age of 33, had his last child when he was 41, and died at the age of 52. Or he may have been a younger son of Robert and Katherine, born after the death of the earlier Robert and given the same name. Another possibility is that he was not a descendant of Nicholas Tapson and Agnes Ebsworthy: he was, however, already living in Bridestowe before his marriage, as is made clear by the marriage entry in the Hittisleigh register (page 159); and his son William #4 named his youngest son Ebsworthy (page 167), which he would surely not have done unless he was a descendant of Nicholas and Agnes. Whereas Nicholas and his branch of the family enjoyed considerable status within the parish community, Robert and his descendants who remained in Bridestowe seem to have been far less prominent in the social scale. Indeed, almost nothing, apart from parish register entries, is now known about them. There is just one small scrap of information which may refer to two of Robert's sons; this is a note in the *Devonshire Association Transactions* Vol VI, page 1502, which quotes a list, undated but thought to be of 1708/9, of *Schoolmaster's Recommendations* for *Bridistow* to Bishop Seth, in which are included the names *Nycholas Tapson* and *Robart Tapson*.



Except where otherwise stated, all marriages, baptisms and burials took place in Bridestowe church.

CHAPTER 6

THE TAPSONS OF STOWFORD

6.1 THE STOWFORD PARISH REGISTERS

The parish of Stowford lies due west of Bridestowe parish, from which it is separated by Thrushelton parish. Immediately west of Stowford parish is the parish of Lifton, of which the western boundary is the river Tamar separating Devonshire from Cornwall. Just beyond the Tamar is the ancient Cornish market town of Launceston; this is the town towards which, as we shall see, many of the Tapsons of Stowford gravitated. The villages of Sourton, Bridestowe, Thrushelton, Stowford and Lifton all lie close to the old A30 as it proceeds westwards from Okehampton, the nearest town for the Tapsons of Bridestowe, to Launceston.

The old name of Launceston, *Dunheved*, indicates that it was a fortified place in Celtic times; this is the purport of the Celtic word *dun*. Launceston has had a castle since Saxon times; there may still be some remnants of the Norman castle, but most of the present remains date from the time of Henry VIII. Launceston was formerly the county town of Cornwall, where the assizes were held; the assizes were later held at both Launceston and Bodmin until they were finally transferred to Bodmin in 1838.

Stowford has a fine church in the Perpendicular style. Its parish registers survive from 1707, but there are some fragmentary bishop's transcripts from before that date; there is no mention of a Tapson in these fragments. Tapson entries in the parish registers are now listed; but it is neither appropriate nor useful to attach a reference number to each child baptized or a reference letter to each family, as was done for the Tapsons of Bridestowe, because the Stowford Tapsons were, from an early date, moving out of and back into their parish much more. [However, the section of this book in which an entry is discussed is, as before, indicated by a section reference number alongside that entry, and these section numbers serve to identify individuals.]

Stowford Marriages from 1707 to 1900

27	Mar	1775	***John Soper*** *of the Parish of Thrushelton &* ***Anne Tapson*** *of this Parish in the presence of Robert Tapson & Matthew Hawkins*	*6.3*
14	May	1776	***John Spear*** *of the Parish of South Petherwin &* ***Elizabeth Tapson*** *of this Parish in the presence of William Spear & Robert Tapson*	*6.3*
6	Jul	1784	***Nicholas Tapson*** *&* ***Mary Walter*** *both of this Parish in the presence of Anne Tapson & ..... Ambrose*	*6.10*
16	Mar	1799	***Thomas Chatworthy*** *of the Parish of Thrushelton &* ***Anne Tapson*** *widow of this Parish in the presence of Matthew Skinner & Charles Hawkins*	*6.3*
18	Feb	1806	***Roger Doidge & Elizabeth Tapson*** *both of this Parish in the presence of Nicholas Tapson, Mary Tapson, Ann Tapson & Chas Hawkins*	*6.10*
17	Sep	1811	***John Tapson & Mary Croker*** *both of this Parish in the presence of John Carter & Nicholas Tapson*	*6.11*
30	Mar	1824	***Humphry Autridge*** *of the Parish of Boyton in the County of Cornwall widower &* ***Mary Tapson*** *of this Parish spinster by licence in the presence of Chas Autridge, Mary Tapson & John Tapson*	*6.10*
14	Jul	1826	***John Jackman*** *bachelor of this Parish &* ***Ann Tapson*** *of Lifton spinster by licence in the presence of Edw. Harry, Jane ..... & ....*	*6.10*

Stowford Baptisms from 1707 to 1900

16	Aug	1752	Robert	son of William & Elizabeth Tapson	6.2
28	Apr	1755	Nicholas	son of William & Elizabeth Tapson	6.2
19	Feb	1760	Ebsworthy	son of William & Elizabeth Tapson	6.2
11?	May	1779	William	son of Robert & Anne Tapson	6.3
15	Jan	1782	Robert	son of Robert & Anne Tapson	6.3
11	Jul	1784	Elizabeth	dau of Robert & Anne Tapson	6.3
28?	Sep	1784	Elizabeth	dau of Nicholas & Mary Tapson	6.10
16	Nov	1785	Ann	dau of Nicholas & Mary Tapson	6.10
21	Nov	1786	John	son of Robert & Anne Tapson	6.3
26	Mar	1787	Mary	dau of Nicholas & Mary Tapson	6.10
22	Jun	1788	John	son of Nicholas & Mary Tapson	6.10
26	May	1789	Anne	dau of Robert & Anne Tapson	6.3
17	Mar	1790	Charlotte	dau of Nicholas & Mary Tapson	6.10
1?	Feb	1792	Nicholas	son of Nicholas & Mary Tapson	6.10
8	Feb	1792	Mary	dau of Robert & Anne Tapson	6.3
4	Dec	1793	Jenny	dau of Nicholas & Mary Tapson (privately named 26 Nov 1793)	6.10
7	Jun	1795	Charles	son of Robert & Anne Tapson (privately named 21 May 1795)	6.3
4	Oct	1795	William	son of Nicholas & Mary Tapson (privately named 8 Sep 1795)	6.10
21	Nov	1797	Robert	son of Nicholas & Mary Tapson (privately named 31 Oct 1797)	6.10
18	Dec	1799	Catherine	dau of Nicholas & Mary Tapson	6.10
5	Feb	1802	Ebsworthy	son of Nicholas & Mary Tapson	6.10
6	Dec	1804	Emlin	dau of Nicholas & Mary Tapson	6.10
27	Oct	1805	Christopher	son of Nicholas & Mary Tapson	6.10
22	Apr	1812	John	son of John & Mary Tapson (born 29 Mar 1812)	6.11
12	Jun	1814	Mary Croker	dau of John & Mary Tapson, Spry Town, Farmer	6.11
16	Mar	1823	James Mason	son of Ebsworthy & Mary Tapson, Lewtrenchard, Labourer	9.11
23	May	1837	Mary	dau of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson, ParishLand, Stowfd, Farmer	6.16
9	Jan	1839	Robert	son of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson, Spry Town, Stowfd, Farmer	6.16
19	Jul	1840	Nicholas	son of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson, ParishLand, Stowfd, Farmer	6.16
26	Jun	1842	Ebsworthy	son of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson, Spry Town, Stowfd, Farmer	6.16
16	Apr	1843	Mary	dau of John & Elizabeth Tapson, Maristow, Farmer	6.12
6	May	1852	Elizabeth	dau of John & Elizabeth Tapson, Down Park, Stowford, Labourer	6.12
9	Feb	1859	Frank Hope	son of George Blatchford & Jane Tapson, Royal Oak, Farmer	9.2

Marystow Land Tax Assessments 1780 to 1784

PROPRIETOR	*OCCUPIER*	*PROPERTY*	£	s	d
Mr Tremaine Esqr	*Willm Tapson*	*Dipfordtown*	*0*	*15*	*4*

However, William's main holding was in Stowford parish, at *Babriball* (probably the Barbaryball shown on modern Ordnance Survey maps, about one and a half miles west of Stowford village). His eldest surviving son, Robert, was also renting land in that parish:

Stowford Land Tax Assessments 1780 to 1783

William Harris Esqr	*William Tapson*	*Babriball*	*2*	*11*	*3*
Do	*Do*	*Hills Tent*	*0*	*2*	*11*
Do	*Robert Tapson*	*Downs Tent*	*1*	*11*	*3*

The Marystow assessment for 1785, the year of William's death, does not survive, and the Stowford assessments for 1784, 1785 and 1786 are missing.

The Tapson graves in Stowford churchyard are to the north of the church tower. The inscription on William's headstone reads:

> *Here resteth In hopes of a Joyful Resurrection the Body of William Tapson of Babriball in this Parish who departed this Life the 26th day of March 1785 In the 83rd Year of his Age Also Adjoining on the South Side resteth the Body of William the Son of the above William Tapson (and Elizabeth his Wife) who resign'd his Breath the 26th day of April 1762*

On the far side of their son's grave is that of William's wife, which has the inscription:

> *Here resteth In hopes of a Joyful Resurrection the Body of Elizabeth the wife of William Tapson of Babriball in this Parish who departed this life the 19th day of January 1773 in the 59th .....*

(The rest of the wording is sunk below the ground.) The age given on William's headstone confirms that he was Bridestowe #4, who would then have been in his 83rd year. As already noted (page 161) his naming a son *Ebsworthy* strongly suggests that his branch of the family were descendants of Nicholas and Agnes; otherwise, surely, he is unlikely to have usurped the *Ebsworthy* name.

6.3 ROBERT TAPSON OF STOWFORD, YEOMAN

William's wife, Elizabeth, had been buried at Stowford before any of her children were married. Anne's was the first wedding, in 1775, then Elizabeth's the following year, both at Stowford. Robert was the next to be married, in the neighbouring parish of Lifton:

> *24 Jun 1778* ***Robert Tapson*** *of the Parish of Stowford &* ***Ann Minisie*** *of the Parish by Banns in the presence of Will. Minisie & Jonathan Bullen*

Their first child, William, was born the following year, followed by Robert, Elizabeth, John, Anne, Mary and Charles; all were baptized at Stowford, where Charles was buried on 8 November 1795, not quite six months old. We have observed above that Robert was already farming in Stowford by 1780; the first surviving returns after his father's death show that he also took over his late father's leases in that parish. Robert's brother Nicholas (page 181) was also renting land in Stowford by 1787:

Stowford Lane Tax Assessments 1787 to 1796

William Harris Esqr	*Robert Tapson*	*Babryball*	*2*	*11*	*3*
Do	*Do*	*Hills Tent*	*0*	*2*	*11*
Do	*Do*	*Downs Tent*	*1*	*11*	*3*
Sr W. Moulsworth	*Nicholas Tapson*	*Parish Land*	*2*	*0*	*2*

Like his father, Robert was active in parish affairs. Pages 227-8 of *Public Charities of the County of Devon III* (WSL 361.76/DEV/CHA) record that the will of Margaret Doyle, widow, bearing date 4 December 1777, left £200 to be invested, the interest to be used for educating poor children of Stowford. In 1779 the sum of £192 (her estate falling short of the legacies bequeathed) was invested in 3% consols: the stock stood in the names of John Doidge, Nicholas Braddon and Robert Tapson. A *Declaration of Trust* (WDRO 891/PF37) by John Doidge, Nicholas Braddon and Robert Tapson, parish trustees, relating to trusts under the will of Margaret Dolye, is dated 18 July 1791; and another *Declaration of Trust* (WDRO 891/PF38) by John Doidge, Robert Tapson and John Greenslade, parish trustees, relating to the same trusts, is dated 5 October 1793.

Robert was buried at Stowford in 1796; he would have been 44 years old. The inscription on his headstone has the same verse as that of William B#45 (page 156):

In memory of Robert Tapson of this Parish who departed this life the 9th day of Oct^{r} 1796 In the 45th Year of his Age

In memory of Charles the Son of Robert and Ann Tapson who was buried the 8th day of Nov^{r} 1795 Aged 6 Months

Just in the flower of my Age
God took me from this earthly stage
Ive left my wife and children dear
Unto the God of Israels care
To whom I trust that he will Bless
The widow and the fatherless

After her husband's death Ann gave up the lease of Babryball, but continued to farm the two smaller properties:

Stowford Land Tax Assessments 1797 and 1798

Re^{vd} W^{m} Harris	*Ann Tapson*	*Downs Tenement*	*1*	*11*	*3*
Do	*Do*	*Hills Tenement*	*0*	*2*	*11*
Stowford Parish	*Nicholas Tapson*	*Parish Land*	*2*	*0*	*2*

Two and a half years after Robert's death Ann remarried; in the Stowford register she is described as a widow, and her second husband is named as Thomas Chatworthy of Thrushelton. William, the eldest son of Robert and Ann, would have been nearly 20 at the time of Ann's second marriage, so it is likely that he had already left home; Robert would have been 17, Elizabeth 14, John 12, Anne 9, and Mary 7, and it seems that they moved to Thrushelton with their mother and stepfather, since Robert and Elizabeth were both married in that parish (page 169). The Thrushelton land tax assessments show that at the time of his marriage Thomas Chatworthy was leasing *Wreys* in Thrushelton parish from Arthur Tremayne Esq^{r} for £3 - 2 - 0. The 1799 return for Stowford has not survived, but the next assessments make it clear that Ann's second husband also took over her leases in that parish after their marriage; he did not renew the lease on Hills after 1802:

Stowford Land Tax Assessments 1800 to 1802

Ex^{rs} of W. Harris Clerk	*Thomas Chatworthy*	*Downs Tenement*	*1*	*11*	*3*
Do	*Do*	*Hills Tenement*	*0*	*2*	*11*
Stowford Parish	*Nicholas Tapson*	*Parish Land*	*2*	*0*	*2*

Stowford Land Tax Assessments 1803 to 1811

Ex^{rs} of W. Harris Clerk	*Thomas Chatworthy*	*Downs Tenement*	*1*	*11*	*3*
Stowford Parish	*Nicholas Tapson*	*Parish Land*	*2*	*0*	*2*

Thomas did not renew his Thrushelton lease after 1810 or his Stowford lease after 1811, when he presumably retired.

6.4 ROBERT TAPSON OF THRUSHELTON, YEOMAN

First Elizabeth and then Robert were married at Thrushelton:

14 Jul 1802 ***John Hall*** *of the Parish of Stowford &* ***Elizabeth Tapson*** *of this Parish*
9 Feb 1803 ***Robert Tapson & Catherine Cowling*** *both of this Parish by Banns*

Elizabeth was only 18 when she married (she is described in her Exeter marriage allegation* as a minor); Robert married at the age of 21. The Thrushelton land tax assessments show that in 1804 Robert acquired a lease on property in the parish, and that he then gradually increased his holdings:

Thrushelton Land Tax Assessments 1804 to 1805

Arthur Tremayn Esq^{r}	*Robert Tapson*	*Cannon Barn*	*4*	*2*	*0*

Thrushelton Land Tax Assessment 1806

Arthur Tremayn Esq^{r}	*Robert Tapson*	*Cannon Barn*	*4*	*2*	*0*
Bullen Esq^{r}	*Do*	*Part of Axworthy*		*12*	*5*

Thrushelton Land Tax Assessments 1807 to 1808

Arthur Tremayn Esq^{r}	*Robert Tapson*	*Cannon Barn*	*4*	*2*	*0*
Do	*Do*	*Castle Down*	*1*	*11*	*0*
Do	*Do*	*New Parks*		*12*	*5*
Bullen Esq^{r}	*Do*	*Ten^{t} in Axworthy*		*12*	*8*

The children of Robert and Catherine were baptized at Thrushelton:

21 Aug 1803	*John*	*son of Robert Tapson & Catherine*
28 Oct 1804	*Ann*	*dau of Robert Tapson & Catherine*
25 Feb 1806	*Mary*	*dau of Robert Tapson & Catherine*
20 Jun 1808	*Robert*	*son of Robert Tapson & Catherine*

Within five months of the baptism of his youngest child *Robert Tapson of Thrushelton* was buried at Stowford, on 16 November 1808; his age, 26 years, was correctly recorded in the burial entry. An entry in the Death Duty Register (PRO IR26/343 Admon 294) shows that Robert had not made a will:

Date Sworn: *9 May 1809*
Sum Sworn: *Under £200*
Intestate: *Robt Tapson of Thrushelton, Yeoman*
Administratrix: *Catherine Tapson of same place, his widow*

Robert's widow, Catherine, still only about 28 years old (see below), did not remarry. Left with four young children, John aged 5, Ann 4, Mary 2, and Robert 6 months (who was buried at Stowford just over a year later), she continued to farm at Thrushelton, but relinquished Axworthy after one year:

Thrushelton Land Tax Assessment 1809

Arthur Tremayne Esq^{r}	*Catherine Tapson*	*Cannon Barn*	*4*	*2*	*0*
Do	*Do*	*Castle Down*	*1*	*11*	*0*
Do	*Do*	*New Parks*		*12*	*5*
Bullen Esq^{r}	*Do*	*Tenement in Axworthy*		*12*	*8*

Thrushelton Land Tax Assessments 1810 to 1811

Arthur Tremayne Esq^{r}	*Catherine Tapson*	*Cannon Barn*	*4*	*2*	*0*
Do	*Do*	*Castle Down*	*1*	*11*	*0*
Do	*Do*	*New Parks*		*12*	*5*

There was no further change up to the last of the surviving returns in 1832, except that J. H. Tremayne Esq^{r} became the proprietor in 1812 and the Rev H. H. Tremayne from 1815.

*C.A.T. FURSDON: Devon Marriage Licences 1734-1837

Two and a half years before he died Robert had taken on a parish apprentice (page 160) named in the Apprenticeship Indenture (WDRO 686/40) as *Roger Gale*:

> *This Indenture made the tenth Day of April ..... 1806 Witnesseth that Richard Smith Church Warden of the Parish of Thrushelton ..... And William Medland & Richard Lennard Overseers of the Poor of the said Parish ..... do put and place Roger Gale aged eight years or thereabouts a poor child of the said Parish Apprentice to Robert Tapson Hor(?) Sprys, axworthy with him to dwell and serve from the Day and Date of these Presents, until the said Apprentice shall accomplish his full Age of twenty one years ..... That he the said Robert Tapson the said Apprentice in Husbandry Work shall and will teach, and instruct, or cause to be taught and instructed, in the best Way and Manner that he can And shall and will during all the Term aforesaid find, provide and allow unto the said Apprentice meet, competent and sufficient Meat, Drink, Apparel, Lodging, Washing, and all other things necessary and fit for an Apprentice .....*

The hamlet of Axworthy is close to the boundary with Bridestowe parish and just north of the old A30.

The apprenticeship indenture goes on to specify the conditions to be met in the event of the death of the master during the term of the apprenticeship. It seems likely that after Robert died Catherine kept on Roger Gale, whose apprenticeship was due to terminate in about 1819, for in 1823 she took on another apprentice, Thomas Gale (WDRO 686/70):

> *This Indenture made the twenty fourth Day of July ..... One Thousand and Eight Hundred and Twenty three Witnesseth that Philip Smith Church Warden of the Parish of Thrushelton ..... And James Martyn and Henry Hortop(?) Overseers of the Poor of the said Parish ..... do put and place Thomas Gale aged Eleven Years .....Apprentice to Catherine Tapson of the said Parish Widow ..... That she the said Catherine Tapson the said Apprentice in Husbandry .....*

This indenture was *sealed and delivered in the presence of John Tapson*, presumably Catherine's son.

The marriages of Ann and Mary are recorded in the Thrushelton parish register:

4 Mar 1828 ***George Rice*** *of Lewtrenchard Parish &* ***Ann Tapson*** *of this Parish by Banns in the presence of Jn° Tapson, John Tapson & William Rice*

28 Sep 1832 ***John Hamley*** *Bachelor of this Parish &* ***Mary Tapson*** *of this Parish Spinster by Banns in the presence of John Tapson & John Hall*

The two John Tapsons named as witnesses at Ann's wedding were probably her brother and her uncle, who was dead by the time of Mary's wedding (page 180).

The 1841 census for Thrushelton (PRO HO107/233/16 Fo. 4) has the entry:

Cannon Barn			
John Tapson	*25-29*	*Farmer*	*Born in Devonshire*
Catherine Tapson	*55-59*		*Born in Devonshire*
George Rice	*9*		*Born in Devonshire*

and in 1851 (PRO HO107/1884 Fo. 373) the household is recorded as:

Cannon Barn					
Catherine Tapson	*Head*	*Wid*	*70*	*Farmer's widow 100 acres employing 5 labourers*	*Devon, Thrushelton*
John Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*47*	*Farmer*	*„ „*

together with two female servants (a *house servant* and a *dairy servant*) and three male servants (*agricultural labourers*). The age given for Catherine suggests that she was born about 1780, in which case she would have been a year or two older than her husband. John's age is correctly given in the 1851 census, but he should have been in the 35-39 age bracket in 1841. Cannon Barn is about half a mile south-west of Thrushelton village.

Catherine died in 1856; she is described on her death certificate* as the widow of *Robert Tapson, a farmer*, and the cause of death was *asthma* and *apoplexy* (i.e. a stroke) on 18 July 1856 at Thrushelton. Her age given in the parish register of Stowford, where she was taken for burial, is consistent with her having been born about 1780.

*Reported by Mrs. Pauline Johnson, Superintendent Registrar at Tavistock.

6.5 JOHN TAPSON OF THRUSHELTON, FARMER

The 1861 census return for Thrushelton (PRO RG9/1464 Fo. 136) provides the following information:

Cannon Barn

John Tapson	*Head*	*Un*	*57*	*Farmer (130 acres) employing 1 labourer & 3 servants*	*Devon,*	*Thrushelton*
Mary Rice	*Niece*	*Un*	*30*	*House Keeper*	*„*	*Lewtrenchard*
Catherine Rice	*Same*	*Un*	*16*	*Assistant Housekeeper*	*„*	*„*
Betsey Rice	*Serv*	*Un*	*17*	*House Maid*	*„*	*Bratton Clovelly*
James Frise	*„*	*Un*	*56*	*Carter*	*„*	*Thrushelton*
John Rich	*„*	*Un*	*18*	*General Servant*	*„*	*„*
Samuel Curtis	*„*	*Un*	*11*	*Cattleboy*	*„*	*„*

The Will of John Tapson dated 13 June 1862

This is the last Will and Testament of me John Tapson of Cannon Barn in the parish of Thrushelton in the County of Devon Farmer and being now of sound mind I make the following disposition of all my property as below. 1st To my Sister Mrs Ann Rice I bequeath All my leasehold Cottages situate in the Village of Lew Down in the parish of Lewtrenchard in the County of Devon. 2ndly To my Sister Mrs Mary Hamley of Higher Mills I bequeath All my Cottages situate on Holster Yard in the parish of Marystowe in the County of Devon together with the sum of Fifteen pounds in money of the Realm. 3rdly To each of my Nephews (to wit) George Rice, John Rice and John Hamley I bequeath respectively the sum of Twenty five pounds and to each of my neices (to wit) Catherine Hamley, Mary Hamley, Joanna Hamley, Ann Rice and Catherine Rice I bequeath respectively the sum of Twenty five pounds. 4thly To my neice Mary Rice I bequeath all my Goods and Chattels together with my real and personal Estate subject to the above conditions and I hereby appoint her whole and sole Executrix of this my last Will and Testament. In witness whereof I have hereunto set my name this thirteenth day of June One thousand eight hundred and sixty two. *John Tapson*

We learn from this will that each of John's two sisters had children. George Rice, whose name appears in the 1841 census for Cannon Barn, was one of Ann's sons, and two of her daughters, Mary and Catherine, are listed in the 1861 return for Cannon Barn. Ann and her husband, George, lived in Lewtrenchard, the parish immediately to the south of Thrushelton parish, in which were situated the cottages which John bequeathed to Ann; the hamlet of Lew Down, the address of the cottages, is on the old A30, less than a mile north-west of Lewtrenchard village. The cottages which John bequeathed to his other sister, Mary, were at Holster Yard in Marystow, the address in the 1851 census of John's second cousin Elizabeth Doidge (page 184).

John died on 19 June 1862 at the age of 58, six days after making his will; his death certificate* records that he was a farmer and that he died at Lifton of *heart disease*. John's body was taken back to Stowford where he was buried on 24 June 1862. Two months later, on 26 August 1862, his will was proved at Exeter *by the oath of Mary Rice, Spinster, Niece of the deceased*, and his effects were valued at *under £600*. John's was only the fourth Tapson will to be proved in the civil probate court, which took over probate matters from the ecclesiastical courts on 11 January 1858. The opening formula of the earlier wills, committing the soul of the testator to God and his body to a decent burial, has now been abandoned, the language has become more concise and the layout considerably more logical. It is interesting that, like his father and baby brother and then his mother, John was buried at Stowford. His father, although born in Stowford, had moved to Thrushelton when he was 17 years old, or soon afterwards, and the others were all born in, and spent their lives in, Thrushelton; yet they still retained an attachment to Stowford. Also taken back to Stowford for burial were William and Ann of Launceston and John and Mary Ann of Tamerton Foliot (page 165). Headstones survive for Robert Tapson of Cannon Barn (died 13 November 1808), his widow Catherine (died 18 July 1856), and their sons Robert (died 23 February 1810) and John (died 19 June 1862).

*Reported by Mrs. Pauline Johnson, Superintendent Registrar at Tavistock.

6.6 WILLIAM TAPSON OF LAUNCESTON, CARPENTER & INNKEEPER

A wedding at the parish church of Werrington, about two miles north of Launceston:

13 Apr 1803 ***William Tapson****, Bᴿ, of the Parish of Launceston, Cornwall &* ***Elizabeth Facey*** *of this Parish, Spinster, by Banns in the presence of Thomas Wise & Elizabeth .....*

was followed by the baptisms at Launceston:

30	*Nov*	*1803*	*Robert*	*son of William & Elizabeth Tapson*
6	*Aug*	*1806*	*William*	*son of William & Elizabeth Tapson*
22	*May*	*1809*	*Hannah*	*dau of William & Elizabeth Tapson*
11	*Nov*	*1812*	*John*	*son of William & Ann Tapson*
5	*Jul*	*1814*	*Elizabeth*	*dau of William & Elizabeth Tapson, West-Gate Street, Carpenter*
30	*Apr*	*1817*	*Charlotte*	*dau of William & Elizabeth Tapson, West-Gate, Carpenter*
6	*Mar*	*1819*	*Sarah*	*dau of William & Elizabeth Tapson, West-Gate, Carpenter*
17	*Feb*	*1821*	*Gertrude*	*dau of William & Elizabeth Tapson, West-Gate, Carpenter*

On the same page as the entry for 11 November 1812 is written:

Appeared personally before John Ching, Mayor — William Tapson and made oath that the baptism under date Novem 11 1812 above written, is that of his son, that he was present at the said baptism and that his wife's name is incorrectly entered, it being Elizabeth and not Ann
Sworn before me this 8th Novem 1840 *John Ching, Mayor*
Witnessed by me *Geo B. Gibbons*

George B. Gibbons was the rector of Launceston at the time.

In the Launceston section of PIGOT & CO'S LONDON & PROVINCIAL COMMERCIAL DIRECTORY for 1823-4 there appears under the heading *Joiners* the entry:

Tapson Wm Westgate-st

and under the heading *Taverns & Public Houses* the entry:

Freemasons Arms W. Philp

The relevance of this second entry will soon become apparent.

A long and complicated indenture (CL PE/5/107) is endorsed:

Mᴿ William Tapson to Mᴿ Christᴿ Lethbridge Appointment of the Freemasons Arms with its Appurtenances and Two Stables and a Courtilage opposite thereto in the Borough of Dunheved otherwise Launceston In Trust for sale for securing £500 and Interest to Mᴿ Thomas Ching

[*Appointment* means the power or right to control or designate the disposition of property. A *Curtilage, Courtilage* (obsolete spelling) or *Courtledge* (spelt, as it was pronounced, in S.W. England) is the ground adjacent to a dwelling house and used in connection with it: in this case, the yard surrounding the stables.]

Appointment of the Freemasons Arms dated 14 June 1824 (Abstract)

Indenture dated 14 June 1824 between

1. William Tapson of the Borough of Dunheved otherwise Launceston Carpenter
2. Thomas Ching of the same place Chemist and Druggist
3. Christopher Lethbridge of Launceston Gentleman

Witnesses that at a court held in the Council Chamber on Saturday 12 June inst. before aldermen of the Borough, *William Tapson was admitted tenant for one Mansion House called the Three Cranes and one Stable and Courtledge without the Southgate of the Borough* formerly in the possession of Digory Pierce, afterwards Richard Derrent, then John Madge deceased and now late of Mary Philp.

Recites a *Lease and Release dated 10th and 11th June 1824 in which all those two stables and courtledges in Launceston without the Southgate opposite certain Dwelling Houses theretofore known as the Cranes and now the Freemasons Arms* were conveyed to William Tapson.

The indenture assigned to Christopher Lethbridge the power of appointment of the Freemasons' Arms (formerly known as the Three Cranes) in the event of William Tapson's failure to repay a mortgage of £500 on the property (with interest stated to be at 4½%) to the mortgagor, Thomas Ching; William Tapson's earlier acquisition, of two stables and curtilages on the opposite side of the road, was to be used as further security. One surmises that Mary Philp was the widow of W. Philp, listed as the innkeeper of the Freemasons' Arms in Pigot's 1823-4 directory.

The Launceston section of Pigot's 1830 directory under *Taverns & Public Houses* has:

Plymouth and Devonport Inn, William Tapson, Southgate

No mention is made of the Freemasons' Arms, so it seems that William renamed the inn. This is borne out by a *Note by H.S.T.* from a collection by H. L. Douche of Notes on Cornish Pubs (CL):

Formerly called 'Plymouth Dock', then 'Devonport', or sometimes 'Plymouth and Devonport'. This was the meeting place of the Free Masons before they built their Hall in Tavistock Road.

One can understand why William should wish to rename the inn after it was no longer used by the Freemasons, but why he should choose to name it after the borough of Devonport, which was formerly known as Plymouth Dock (page 217), is a mystery. As further evidence that the *Freemasons' Arms* and the *Plymouth and Devonport* were one and the same, we note that Pigot's 1823-4 directory did not mention the *Plymouth and Devonport* (or its variations in name). Pigots 1830 directory also lists under Launceston *Taverns & Public Houses*:

Turks Head, Wm Tapson, Church-st

but it is not clear whether or not this was the same William Tapson.

One event in William's life has been recorded by Alfred F. Robbins on page 309 of his book *Launceston Past and Present* published in 1888. Discussing crime in Launceston during the early part of the century, the author cites the following case:

> *A still more striking instance of the ease with which those guilty of murder escaped the gallows, while a multitude of lesser offenders were hurried into eternity, was afforded in 1814. An execution for rent had been "put in" at Higher Bamham, and the Sheriff's officers went on a Saturday to levy distress. They found the door to be locked, and, having waited until the next day and still gained no admittance, they called upon the borough constables (then chosen annually from among the inhabitants) to assist them to break open the door. The constables (Samuel Jory, a Broad Street tradesman, Joshua Farthing, a sergeant of militia, and William Tapson, keeper of the Plymouth Dock, now the Devonport, Inn) went to Bamham on the Sunday accordingly, and were preparing to force an entrance, the farmer and his two sons being within, when Jory was shot dead through the doorway. Nothing daunted, the remaining constables made their way in and arrested the three, who were committed to the assizes at Bodmin charged with the murder.*

William Tapson did not purchase the inn until ten years after these events, so Robbins seems to have given William's later occupation, for which he was perhaps better known than as a carpenter. A report in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* dated 20 August 1814 (CL) of the trial, held at Bodmin Assizes on 10 August 1814, states that *Jacob Francis, aged 45, Catherine Francis, his wife, aged 44, John Francis, their son, aged 22, Eliza Francis, aged 20, and Catherine Francis, aged 16, their daughters, were indicted for the wilful murder of Samuel Jory.* The only witness to give evidence was Nicholas Symons, a sheriff's bailiff, who explained that while he was holding the muzzle of the gun Mrs Francis pulled the trigger, so causing Jory's injuries from which he was to die. *The facts of the case appearing so clearly in Symons' evidence, the Judge said that it was unnecessary to call any of the other witnesses; and as the prisoners had nothing to offer in their defence, his Lordship proceeded to sum up the evidence, and under his direction the Jury returned a verdict of "Manslaughter" against the prisoners, and they were all sentenced to be imprisoned for two years.*

The Launceston parish register records the burials of William's wife and second son:

28	*Oct*	*1831*	*Elizabeth Tapson*	*South-Gate*	*51*
3	*Feb*	*1833*	*William Tapson*	*Race-Hill*	*26*

William's age is correctly stated.

The address of the Plymouth and Devonport Inn is given in Pigot's 1830 directory as *Southgate*, and in the 1824 indenture as *without the Southgate*; the address *Race-Hill* is mentioned in a manuscript by Richard Robbins among H. L. Douche's Collection of Notes on Cornish Pubs:

William Tapson, Dock Inn, Race Hill & Exeter Road (the corner of these two, still there) .....

The inn still exists today, but is now known as the *Newmarket*.

William remarried in 1840 at Launceston parish church (the fathers were not named):

2 Jan 1840	***William Tapson***	*Full*	*Widower*	*Builder*	*Launceston*
	Ann Derrent	*Full*	*Spinster*		*Launceston*
		in the presence of Matthew Derrent & Susan Derrent			

Although William gives his occupation as *builder*, Pigot's 1844 directory still lists him as an innkeeper:

Plymouth and Devonport Inn, William Tapson, Southgate

and WILLIAMS' COMMERCIAL DIRECTORY OF THE PRINCIPAL MARKET TOWNS IN CORNWALL for 1847 lists:

Tapson, William, Vict, "Plymouth and Devonport Inn", Exeter-road

Derrant, Matthew, Beer-retailer, Race-hill [A witness at the wedding.]

The 1841 census for Launceston (PRO HO107/154/1 Fo. 12) lists William's household:

Race Hill			
William Tapson	*60-64*	*Publican*	*Born in Cornwall*
Ann Tapson	*45-49*		*Not born in Cornwall*
Charlotte Tapson	*20-24*	*Assistant*	*Born in Cornwall*
Sarah Tapson	*20-24*	*„*	*Born in Cornwall*
James Derrent	*11*	*„*	*Born in Cornwall*

together with two male servants and four lodgers. William was not, however, born in Cornwall; his county of birth is given correctly in the 1851 census for Launceston (PRO HO107/1899 Fo. 363):

Exeter Road					
William Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*72*	*Retired Innkeeper*	*Devon, Stowford*
Ann Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*56*		*London*

It is now apparent that William was Robert's son, who would have been very nearly 72 at the time of the 1851 census. Although his second wife, Ann, was described in the marriage entry as a spinster, James Derrent was, as will be confirmed later, her son born about 1830.

It is known from his will that it was William's daughter Elizabeth who was married at the church of St. Mary, Newington, then in Surrey, south of Southwark near the Elephant and Castle:

30 May 1836 ***Thomas Doidge*** *of this Parish Bachelor &* ***Elizabeth Tapson*** *of this Parish Spinster, by Banns, in the presence of W^m^ Williams & Rebecca Mason*

Three more of William's daughters were married at Launceston, although it is not clear whether Ann was William's natural daughter or an illegitimate child of Elizabeth Facey born before their marriage:

19 Dec 1839	***Charles Atkins***	*Full*	*Widower*	*Innkeeper*	*Launceston*
			(Father: William Atkins, —)		
	Ann Tapson	*Full*	*Spinster*	*—*	*Launceston*
			(Father: William Tapson, Builder)		
		in the presence of William Tapson & Charlotte Tapson			
16 May 1843	***Henry Essery Cotton***	*Full*	*Bachelor*	*Ironmonger*	*St. Columb Major*
			(Father: — —)		
	Sarah Tapson	*Full*	*Spinster*		*Launceston*
			(Father: William Tapson, Innkeeper)		
		in the presence of William Tapson & Mary Tapson			
4 May 1848	***John Congdon***	*Full*	*Bachelor*	*Accountant*	*Launceston*
			(Father: George Denham Congdon, Farmer)		
	Charlotte Tapson	*Full*	*Spinster*		*Launceston*
			(Father: William Tapson, Innkeeper)		
		in the presence of William Tapson & Mary Congdon			

The Will of William Tapson dated 10 June 1850

This is the last Will and Testament of me William Tapson of the Borough of Launceston in the County of Cornwall Gentleman I devise all real Estates vested in me as Mortgagee or Trustee unto my son Robert Tapson my son in law Charles Attkyns and John Lethbridge Cowlard of Launceston aforesaid Gentleman ..... I devise all my real Estate and bequeath all my personal Estate to the said Robert Tapson Charles Attkyns and John Lethbridge Cowlard upon Trust to sell my real Estate and get in my personal Estate ..... to pay ..... the legacies following that is to say To my dear wife who is otherwise well provided for Five Pounds and to my daughter Ann the wife of the said Charles Attkyns for whom I have already made an advancement five pounds ..... and ..... to stand possessed of the sum of One Hundred Pounds upon Trust for all and every the child or children of my deceased son John Tapson ..... And upon further trust to invest the residue of the Monies to arise from my said real and personal estate ..... In Trust for my children the said Robert Tapson Elizabeth the wife of Thomas Doidge Charlotte the wife of John Congdon and Sarah the wife of Henry Essery Cotton in equal shares ..... and I appoint the said Robert Tapson Charles Attkyns and John Lethbridge Cowlard to be Executors of my will ..... In witness whereof I the said Testator William Tapson have ..... set my Hand this Tenth day of June one thousand eight Hundred and Fifty William Tapson

Codicil dated 30 December 1850 *..... whereas since the execution of my said will my dear daughter Charlotte Congdon has departed this life leaving two children of whom William Congdon only now survives ..... I direct the Trustees ..... to set apart ..... the sum of One Hundred Pounds upon Trust for the said William Congdon*

William's daughters Hannah and Gertrude are not mentioned in the will, though there is no burial entry for either of them in the Launceston parish or Wesleyan registers. William, who died on 25 December 1853, was buried at Launceston:

1 Jan 1854 Will^m^ Tapson Newport 74

William's age is correctly given. Probate of his will was granted at Launceston on 19 April 1854 by the Archidiaconal Court of Cornwall (CRO). Effects sworn: under £300.

The Will of Ann Tapson dated 4 July 1860

This is the Last Will and Testament of me Ann Tapson of Launceston in the County of Cornwall Widow I give devise and bequeath all and whatsoever I may die possessed of or entitled to unto my executor hereinafter named ..... upon the trusts hereinafter mentioned And whereas my son James William Derrent left the Port of Plymouth in England for Australia on or about the sixth day of October one thousand eight hundred and fifty two and I have never received any letter or communication from him since and I believe he is dead Now my will is that in case my said son shall be living my executor ..... do transfer or pay the same chattels monies and effects unto my said son James William Derrent ..... but in case the said James William Derrent shall die or be dead without leaving lawful issue then my will is that my executor ..... do transfer and pay the same unto my neice Arabella Russel Derrent ..... And I hereby nominate ..... George Graham White of Launceston ..... Gentleman whole and sole Executor of this my will In witness whereof I the said Ann Tapson have hereunto set my hand this fourth day of July one thousand eight hundred and sixty Ann Tapson

James William Derrent would have been about 21 when he emigrated to Australia. For eight years Ann had awaited news of him, her only son, not knowing whether he was dead, or alive but had just not bothered to write to her, until in 1860, fearing the worst, she thought it necessary to make her sad will. The 1861 census for Launceston (PRO RG9/1520 Fo. 19) shows Ann living alone:

Angel Hill

Ann Tapson Head Wid 66 Annuitant Surrey

Ann was to live for another five years, dying on 22 November 1865, over thirteen years after her son had left England. Since she never changed her will, Ann obviously heard nothing more from him and died still not knowing for certain what had become of him. She was buried at Launceston:

29 Nov 1865 Ann Grace Tapson Angel Hill 70

The will was proved at London on 20 April 1867, her estate being valued at *under £100*.

6.7 ROBERT TAPSON OF ISLINGTON, CARPENTER

The early life of William's eldest son, Robert, remains a mystery, but the 1851 census shows him living in the north-east London parish of All Saints, Islington (PRO HO107/1499 Fo. 657):•

No 9 Goulden Terrace

Robert Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*47*	*Carpenter*	*Cornwall, Launceston*
Mary Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*45*		*Kent, Rochester*
George Wise	*Adopted*	*Un*	*11*		*Westminster*

William's son, baptized at Launceston on 30 November 1803 (page 172), would have been 47; he had followed in his father's trade as a carpenter. However, Mary Ann was not Robert's wife; possibly she had separated from her first husband but had been unable to remarry whilst he was still alive. Before 1858 true divorce was rare and expensive, and achieved only by a private bill in the House of Lords; the ecclesiatical courts could decree a legal separation, but the parties had to undertake not to remarry. The wedding of Robert and Mary Ann did not take place until nearly ten years after this census, in the parish church of Frindsbury, about a mile to the north-east of the centre of Rochester:

16 Jul 1860	***Robert Tapson***	*Full*	*Bachelor*	*Carpenter*	*Frindsbury*
		(Father: William Tapson, Carpenter deceased)			
	Mary Ann Skinner	*Full*	*Widow*		*Frindsbury*
		(Father: John Hill, Agent)			

by Banns in the presence of James L. Barritt & Elizabeth Doidge

Robert was 56 years old at the time of his wedding and Mary Ann, to judge from the age given for her in the census returns, two or three years younger; Elizabeth Doidge, the second witness, seems to have been one of Robert's sisters, who was married at Newington, Surrey, in 1836 (page 174).

Robert and Mary Ann had spent some time in Frindsbury prior to their wedding, but were back at their All Saints, Islington, address for the 1861 census (PRO RG9/128 Fo. 77):

9 Goulden Terrace

Robert Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*57*	*Carpenter*	*Cornwall, Launceston*
Mary A. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*54*		*Kent, Rochester*
Charles Doidge	*Nephew*	*Un*	*23*	*Clk*	*Devon, Tavistock*

Charles Doidge, clearly a son of Robert's sister Elizabeth, would have been born about 1837. The Doidges must have returned to the Westcountry soon after their wedding, since Charles was born at Tavistock; but Elizabeth was back in the home counties in time for Robert's wedding.

The 1862 edition of KELLY'S POST OFFICE DIRECTORY for London lists, in the *Court* section:

Tapson Robt. 9 Goulden ter, Barnsby rd N

but Kelly's 1863 directory for London, Northern Suburbs, has the entry:

Tapson Robert, carpenter, Shacklewell green NE

Robert is included in the 1871 census for the parish of St. John, Hackney (PRO RG10/314 Fo. 79):

Caledonian House, Shacklewell Green

Robert Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*67*	*Builder*	*Cornwall, Launceston*
Catherine Berry	*Serv*	*Wid*	*54*	*Domestic*	*Ireland*

Shacklewell Green, Hackney, is just over two miles north-east of Barnsbury Road. Curiously, Robert is also included in the 1871 return for All Saints, Islington (PRO RG10/260 Fo. 57); possibly Mary had moved back to Barnsbury Road ahead of Robert, who was about to retire, but wrongly included his name in that census return, and also became confused about his birthplace:

32 Barnsbury Road

Robert Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*67*	*Retired Builder*	*Cornwall, St. Austell*
Mary A. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*63*		*Kent, Rochester*
Emily Hubbard	*Serv*	*Un*	*19*	*Domestic Servant*	*Essex, Southminster*
Arthur Nichol	*Boarder*	*Un*	*27*	*Rule Maker*	*Middlesex, Sudbury*

Robert and Mary are shown in the 1881 census return (PRO RG11/885 Fo. 54) for the parish of St. Nicholas, Rochester, the town where Mary had been born and to which they had retired:

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

Rochester Common, 5 Ross's Buildings					
Robert Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*77*	*Librarian*	*Cornwall, Launceston*
Mary A. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*74*	*„ Wife*	*Kent, Borstal*

Ross's Buildings would appear to have been tenements. Borstal, Mary Ann's birthplace, is about three miles south of the centre of Rochester on the far side of the river Medway. The death was registered of Mary Ann Tapson in 1881, Q4 (Medway R.D.), her age being given as 75. It was noted in the 1881 census return that that Robert was suffering from asthma; he made his will that same year:

The Will of Robert Tapson dated 20 November 1881

This is my last Will and Testament of me Robert Tapson of N° 5 the Common Rochester in the parish of St. Nicholas in the County of Kent I Robert Tapson give & bequeath to George Wise of the Post Office Westbourne Road Barnsbury London all my household furniture Insurance money that might be due to me & all other monies jewellery &c. that I may have at my death ..... the said furniture to be amicably divided between the said George Wise & Eliza Maclin of N° 5 The Common Rochester Kent *Robert Tapson*

Robert died on 21 October 1882 at the Workhouse, Chatham. Since he had failed to name an executor, administration was granted, on 1 December 1882, to George Wise, his adopted son. Robert is described in the letters of administration as a *Journeyman Carpenter late of Rochester*, and his age is correctly given as 78. [A *journeyman* was a day labourer who had served his apprenticeship; he usually lived away from his place of work.] It appears from the will that Robert and Mary Ann had no (surviving) children, unless George Wise was Mary Ann's son by her first marriage.

6.8 JOHN TAPSON OF LIFTON & CARLTON, JOINER & EXCISE OFFICER

William's son John was married at Lawhitton, the parish immediately to the east of Launceston:

8 Sep 1836 ***John Tapson*** *of the Parish of Mary Magdalen Launceston &* ***Elizabeth Maddever Lang*** *of this Parish by Banns in the presence of William Tapson & Ann Tapson*

John and Elizabeth set up home at Lifton, where their first two children were baptized:

1 Feb 1838 William Lang son of John & Elizabeth Maddever Tapson, Lifton Village, Joiner•
3 Sep 1840 Ann Lang dau of John & Elizabeth Maddever Tapson, Lifton, Joiner

The family are shown in the 1841 census for Lifton (PRO HO107/232/13 Fo. 4):

Lifton Village			
John Tapson	*28*	*Carpenter*	*Not born in Devonshire*
Elizabeth Tapson	*27*		*Not born in Devonshire*
William Tapson	*3*		*Born in Devonshire*
Ann Tapson	*9 mo.*		*Born in Devonshire*
William Croker	*22*	*Carps Ass*	*Born in Devonshire*
Mary Oliver	*16*	*F.S.*	*Not born in Devonshire*

[*F.S.* was the abbreviation for *Female Servant*.] Like his father, and like Robert, his elder and only surviving brother, John had become a carpenter and joiner. Although the enumerator should have entered the ages of adults in five-year age-bands, the exact age given for John (and the fact that he was not born in Devonshire) confirms that he was William's son. John gave his age absolutely correctly in the census return — as he should have done, since only a few months before he had checked the date of his baptism in the register of St. Mary Magdalene, the parish church of Launceston. He was no doubt somewhat disconcerted to find that his mother's name had been entered as *Ann* instead of *Elizabeth*, so that his father had to go to the church to sort it all out with the rector and the mayor (page 172).

•The birth was registered (Tavistock R.D.) as *William Henry Lang*, born 5 January 1838.

In the days before civil registration there were no birth cerificates, so proof of a person's age could only be provided by the production of a copy of his baptismal entry. Such proof was needed at that time by John, who was applying for a position in the government service as an Excise Officer; this is confirmed by an entry in an Excise Minute Book (PRO CUST47/650 Fo. 16) dated Thursday 12th January 1843:

John Tapson, Expectant, instructed in Barum Collection, on the recommendation of the Right Honorable the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury. Certificate dated the 7th instant.

During this period of training for John it would seem that his wife, Elizabeth, and their two children were living with her parents, for the birth of another child, Robert, registered in 1843, Q1 (Launceston R.D.), was followed by the burial at Lawhitton:

10 Jan 1844 Robert Tapson, Combeford 11 months

Combeford was the home of Elizabeth's parents; it is the address given in Elizabeth's own baptismal entry in the Lawhitton register:

10 Nov 1813 Elizabeth Maddeford dau of William & Joanna Lang, Combeford, Farmer

Just over a year after he began his period as an expectant John's first staff position is recorded in a Minute Book entry (PRO CUST47/652 Fo. 214) dated Friday 2nd February 1844:

George Hoskin, Officer of Bradford 1st Ride, Bath Collection, being superannuated, ... Ordered that Henry James Elvery, 5th Assistant in London South Collection succeed him, and that John Tapson, Expectant in Barum Collection, succeed Elvery.

After a year in London South John had a promotion, which is recorded in another Minute Book entry dated Thursday 13th February 1845 (PRO CUST47/658 Fo. 72):

..... promotion for John William Priestman, Officer of Worksop 2nd Ride, Lincoln Collection, ... Ordered that John Tapson, 5th Assistant in London South Collection, succeed Priestman.

John's wife and family now joined him in Nottinghamshire, where they settled at Carlton (probably Carlton in Lindrick about four miles north of Worksop) and the births of three more of their children were registered (Worksop R.D.): Elizabeth in 1846, Q2; Robert in 1848, Q3; and John in 1849, Q4. Robert's death was registered (Worksop R.D.) in 1849, Q1.

The final entry in the Minute Books relating to John (PRO CUST47/681 Fo. 28) was dated Tuesday 19th March 1850:

John Tapson, Officer of Worksop 2nd Ride, Lincoln Collection, being dead; Ordered that John Bray, Officer of Sheffield 1st Ride, Sheffield Collection, succeed him, at his own request.

John's death was registered (Worksop R.D) in 1850, Q1; he would have been 37 years old.

A year after John's death Elizabeth was living in Launceston and established as a shopkeeper, as we learn from the 1851 census for that parish (PRO HO107/1899 Fo. 340):

South Gate

Elizabeth Tapson	*Head*	*Wid*	*36*	*Shopkeeper*	*Cornwall, Lawhitton*
William Tapson	*Son*		*12*	*Scholar*	*Devon, Lifton*
Ann Tapson	*Dau*		*9*	*Scholar*	*" "*

William's age should have been entered as 13, Ann's as 10. The younger daughter, presumably because Elizabeth was unable to look after her whilst she was keeping shop, was with her great-uncle and great-aunt at their farm in the parish of Lawhitton (PRO HO107/1899 Fo. 417):

Tregada

Richard Lang	*Head*	*Mar*	*65*	*Farmer 50 Acres, 1 Lab*	*Cornwall, S.Petherwin*
Phillipa Lang	*Wife*	*Mar*	*58*		*" Lezant*
William Lang	*Nephew*	*Un*	*25*	*Assistant on Farm*	*" Launceston*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Niece*		*4*	*Scholar*	*Nottingham, Carlton*
William Northcott	*Serv*	*Un*	*17*	*Farm Lab*	*Cornwall, Lizard*

6.10 NICHOLAS TAPSON OF STOWFORD, YEOMAN

Nicholas, the second surviving son of William Tapson, married Mary Walter in 1784 at Stowford, where their thirteen children, Elizabeth, Ann, Mary, John, Charlotte, Nicholas, Jenny, William, Robert, Catherine, Ebsworthy, Emlin and Christopher were all baptized. The baptismal entry for Nicholas's wife also appears in the Stowford parish register (but is much more legible in the bishop's transcripts):

3 Mar 1761 Mary dau of John & Elizabeth Walters

Mary was about six years younger than Nicholas.

On 1 October 1770 Nicholas's father, William, in association with William Spry of Thrushelton and John Hall of Stowford, had taken out a one-year lease on Parish Land at Over Spry (WDRO 891/615) for a rent described as *One Pepper Corn*. Over Spry was probably land on high ground overlooking Spry Town, a hamlet about one and a half miles south-west of Stowford village and immediately to the south of Barbaryball, William's main holding; the hamlet was called *Sprei* in the Domesday Book of 1086. William and his associates did not retain the lease of the Parish Land for long, because in the earliest of the surviving land tax assessment returns, those of 1780 to 1783, the occupier was named as John Walter (perhaps Nicholas's father-in-law). The land tax assessments for 1784 to 1786 are missing, but by 1787 Nicholas had acquired the lease (page 167). Extracts from the Stowford land tax returns already given (pages 167, 168) show that he was still farming the Parish Land in 1811. Nicholas continued to farm the Parish Land until his death in 1813; in 1812 he also took a one-year lease on Spry Mills:

Stowford Land Tax Assessment 1812

Feoffees of Stowford	*Nicholas Tapson*	*Parish Land*	*2*	*0*	*2*
Margaret Pearce	*Do*	*Spry Mills*	*2*	*0*	*0*

Stowford Land Tax Assessment 1813

The Feofies of Stowford	*Nicholas Tapson*	*Parish Land*	*2*	*0*	*2*

A document dated 11 March 1797 (WDRO 891/616) is an indenture for the lease of *Parish Lands at Overspry* for 14 or 21 years (counterpart) by the *rectors of Stowford, Lifton and Werrington, feoffees of the Parish of Stowford*, to *Nicholas Tapson of Stowford, Yeoman*. Husbandry agreements were included in the indenture and the annual rent was set at £32. Nicholas was probably renewing the lease which he had originally taken out ten years earlier.

When his father died in 1785 Nicholas took over the lease of the land which William had been renting in Marystow (page 167), and continued to farm there, as well as on the Parish Land in Stowford, until his own death in 1813:

Marystow Land Tax Assessments 1786 to 1813

Arthur Tremayne Esq	*Nicholas Tapson*	*Dipfordtown*	*0*	*15*	*4*

Emlin Tapson, Spry Town, Stowford, 11, who was buried on 3 October 1813, must have been the youngest daughter of Nicholas and Mary, but she would have been very nearly 9 years old, not 11 as stated in the parish register. Having brought up thirteen children, Mary, if the error was hers, may be forgiven for getting their ages wrong, especially since her husband was dying at the time. He was already *in a weak state of health* when he made his will on 24 June 1813, and he was buried two and a half weeks after his daughter, at the age of 58. Nicholas's will was proved in the Archidiaconal Court of Totnes on 12 May 1814, and so was destroyed during the Second World War; however, a copy was made for the Stamp Duty Office (DRO T87). Probate was granted to his widow, Mary, and effects sworn were *under £200*:

The Will of Nicholas Tapson dated 24 June 1813

In the Name of God Amen I Nicholas Tapson of the Parish of Stowford in the County of Devon yeoman being in a weak state of health but of perfect and disposing Mind Memory and Understanding do make publish and declare this Writing to be and Contain my last Will and Testament in Manner following (that is to say) First I commend my Soul into the hands of Almighty God my Creator hoping through his Mercy and the Merits and Mediation of my blessed Saviour and Redeemer Jesus Christ to obtain pardon and permission for all my sins and my Body I Commit to the Earth to be interred at the discretion of my Executor hereinafter named And as to all such Worldly Estate and Effects which God hath blessed me with I give and dispose thereof as Follows I give and bequeath to Mary my Beloved Wife all my Personable and Testamentary Estate and Effects Whatsoever and Wheresoever in whose hands or Possession soever the same shall be at the time of my Decease after Payment of all my just Debts and Funeral Expenses And I do hereby Nominate Constitute and appoint the said Mary my Beloved Wife Whole and Sole Executor of this my last Will and Testament her Executors Administrators and Assigns In witness whereof I have subscribed my Name and affixed my Seal the Twenty fourth day of June One Thousand Eight Hundred and thirteen Nicholas Tapson

After her husband's death Mary continued to rent the Parish Lands at Over Spry; initially Nicholas's name was still given as the occupier in the land tax returns, but afterwards, until the last of the assessments in 1832, Mary's name was used:

Stowford Land Tax Assessments 1814 and 1815

The Feofies of Stowford	*Nicholas Tapson*	*Parish Land*	*2*	*0*	*2*

Stowford Land Tax Assessments 1816 to 1832

Feoffees of Stowford	*Mary Tapson*	*Parish Land*	*2*	*0*	*2*

Also after Nicholas's death Mary retained, until 1825, the lease of Dipfordtown in the parish of Marystow; and in 1822 her son John (page 184) acquired a lease on land in Marystow:

Marystow Land Tax Assessments 1814 to 1821

Rev H. H. Tremayne	*Mary Tapson*	*Dipford Town*	*0*	*15*	*4*

Marystow Land Tax Assessments 1822 to 1825

Rev H. H. Tremayn	*Mary Tapson*	*Dypfordtown*	*0*	*15*	*4*
*William Harrise Esq^r^*	*John Tapson*	*Twelve acres*	*1*	*17*	*6*

In 1819, a year after the expiry of the lease which Nicholas had negotiated in 1797 for Over Spry (page 181), Mary had renewed it for a further term of 14 years. The indenture (WDRO 891/618) between the feoffees and *Mary Tapson of Stowford, widow*, dated 10 February 1819, refers to a *messuage and farm called Parish Lands in Spry Town, Stowford*. Husbandry agreements were included and the annual rent was increased to £35.

We learn from pages 226-7 of *Public Charities of the County of Devon III* (WSL 361.76/DEV/CHA) that the Parish Land at Over Spry had been given to the parish, the issues and profits from which to be used for reparations of the parish church and, if anything should remain, as alms for the relief of the poor of the parish. The extract continues:

> *The property now consists of a farmhouse in good repair, and about 30 acres of arable and meadow land, and a wood of about six acres, containing a good deal of young timber, and some trees fit to cut, at Over Spry, in the parish of Stowford.*
>
> *The estate is in the occupation of Mary Tapson, widow, to whom it was demised by the feoffees under the valuation of a surveyor, for a term of 14 years from Ladyday, 1818, at*

the clear yearly rent of £35. It had been leased to Nicholas Tapson, her husband, for the preceding 21 years, at the yearly rent of £32, subject to deductions for rates, taxes and repairs. The present tenant had, at the time of our investigation (August 1823), paid her rent to Michaelmas, 1822, but had made an application for a reduction of the rent, which was at that time under the consideration of the feoffees.

In 1806, timber was sold to the amount of £73, of which £39 9s was applied to the purchase of a tenor bell for the church, and £30 9s 6d was paid over to the overseers [of the poor]. *In 1814, timber was sold to the amount of £64 1s and in the following year £33 10s 9d was paid over to the overseers.*

In spite of Mary's application for a reduction of rent, when she renewed the agreement on 25 March 1833 (WDRO 891/619) for a further 7 years the annual rent was increased to £37. This time the indenture refers to *property called Parish Lands, except dwelling house and appurtenances called Bellamyes house and consentionary rent of 10s, and one other house occupied by Rowe.* Mary died two years later and was buried at Stowford on 16 October 1835. She would have been in her 75th year; the burial entry gives her age as 75.

Elizabeth, the eldest daughter of Nicholas and Mary, married Roger Doidge at Stowford in 1806; Elizabeth was 21 at the time. [Elizabeth's cousin Elizabeth, just two months older, had been married at Thrushelton in 1802 (page 169), so there can be no confusion between them.] Further evidence that this Elizabeth was the bride in 1806 is provided later (page 184). The Ann who married John Jackman at Stowford in 1826 was the second daughter of Nicholas and Mary, then aged 40; again, confirmation will appear later (page 188). And it was Mary, the third daughter of Nicholas and Mary, who married Humphry Autridge at Stowford in 1824 at the age of 37; evidence that this Mary was the bride will also be provided later (page 188).

Pigot's 1823-4 directory for Okehampton lists under *Shopkeepers &c*:

Tapson, Catherine, linen draper, Fore-st

Catherine was shortly to be married in the parish church of Okehampton:

30 Mar 1824 ***William Treliving*** *sojourner of this Parish &* ***Catherine Tapson*** *of this Parish by Banns in the presence of Thos Lemon & Joseph Sprague*

And Pigot's 1844 directory for Okehampton lists under *Shopkeepers & Traders*:

Treliving Wm, linen & woollen draper

On the night of the 1851 census for Okehampton (PRO HO107/1885 Fo. 372) William Treliving was away from home:

Parade

Catherine Treliving	*Wife*	*Mar*	*51*	*Linen Draper*	*Devon,*	*Stowford*
Catherine Treliving	*Dau*	*Un*	*25*	*„ „*	*„*	*Okehampton*
Mary Ann Treliving	*Dau*	*Un*	*17*	*„ „*	*„*	*„*
Henry J. C. Treliving	*Son*	*Un*	*15*	*Drapers Apprentice*	*„*	*„*
James R. Treliving	*Son*	*Un*	*10*	*Scholar*	*„*	*„*
Mary E. Lethbridge	*Serv*	*Un*	*19*	*Drapers Apprentice*	*„*	*Sampford Courtenay*
Elizabeth W. Jackman	*Serv*	*Un*	*19*	*House Servant*	*„*	*„ „*

Parade is off Fore Street. Catherine's age and place of birth given in this return confirm that she was the youngest surviving daughter of Nicholas and Mary, married when she was 24. Her husband is included in the 1861 census return for Okehampton (PRO RG9/1467 Fo. 31), in which the naming of Catherine's place of birth as Sprytown leaves no doubt about her identity:

Fore Street

William Treliving	*Head*	*Mar*	*65*	*Draper*	*Devon,*	*Devonport*
Catherine Treliving	*Wife*	*Mar*	*61*		*„*	*Sprytown*
Henry J. C. Treliving	*Son*	*Un*	*25*	*Draper*	*„*	*Okehampton*
Emily D. Treliving	*Niece*	*Un*	*19*	*Drapers Ap*	*Cornwall,*	*Torpoint*
Grace Webb	*Serv*	*Un*	*18*	*House Servant*	*Devon,*	*Stowford*

6.11 JOHN TAPSON OF STOWFORD & MARYSTOW, FARMER

John, the eldest son of Nicholas and Mary, married Mary Croker at Stowford on 17 September 1811. [There can be no doubt that the groom was this John rather than his cousin John, one and a half years older, because he had married Mary Ann Chowen two years before (page 180).] John would have been 23 at the time. The children of John and Mary were baptized at Stowford: John on 22 April 1812 and Mary Croker on 12 June 1814. John's wife, Mary, obviously died soon after the birth of their second child; she was only 22 years old. Her funeral took place on the same day as the baptism of Mary Croker, but the child died six months later and was buried on 30 December 1814. Spry Town, the address of the family given in the baptismal and burial entries, is further evidence that this John was Nicholas's son.

The land tax assessments for Marystow show that in 1822 John acquired a lease on land in that parish known as Twelve Acres (page 182); subsequent land tax returns, right up to the last one in 1832, include him as the occupier:

Marystow Land Tax Assessment 1826

William Harrise Esq[r]	*John Tapson*	*Twelve acres*	*1*	*17*	*6*

Marystow Land Tax Assessments 1827 to 1832

Miss Penelope Harrise	*John Tapson*	*Twelve acres*	*1*	*17*	*6*

John was still farming Twelve Acres at the time of the 1841 census for Marystow (PRO HO107/233/2 Fo. 7), and John's son, John, with his wife and baby son (page 185), were also living at Twelve Acres in 1841:

Twelve Acres			
John Tapson	*50-54*	*Farmer*	*Born in Devonshire*
John Tapson	*25-29*		*Born in Devonshire*
Elizabeth Tapson	*25-29*		*Born in Devonshire*
Nicholas Tapson	*2 mo.*		*Born in Devonshire*

By the time of the 1851 census John had retired and was visiting his sister in Marystow (PRO HO107/1884 Fo. 299):

Holster Yard						
Roger Doidge	*Head*	*Mar*	*74*	*Ag. Labourer*	*Devon,*	*Stowford*
Elizabeth Doidge	*Wife*	*Mar*	*66*		*„*	*„*
Robert Doidge	*Son*	*Un*	*24*	*Ag. Lab*	*„*	*Marystow*
John Tapson	*Visitor*	*Mar*	*63*	*Pauper (Formerly Farmer)*	*„*	*Stowford*

Nicholas's daughter Elizabeth would have been 66 at the time of the census and John very nearly 63. Her age given in this return confirms that it was this Elizabeth who married Roger Doidge in 1806 at Stowford (page 183).

Although Roger and Elizabeth Doidge lived in Marystow, they had their children baptized at Stowford, where the parish register records the baptisms of Jane on 30 June 1806, Roger on 1 February 1808, Mary on 22 April 1810, Elizabeth on 28 June 1812, Emlin on 16 October 1814, Ann on 9 February 1817, John on 30 May 1819, Charlotte on 8 April 1821, Catherine on 4 May 1823, William on 5 September 1824, Robert on 24 November 1826 and Mary on 15 December 1829; all were described as children of *Roger and Elizabeth Doidge, Marystowe, Labourer*. Robert Doidge listed in the census return would indeed have been 24 at the time.

John was buried at Stowford on 30 May 1859; his age, 71, was correctly recorded in the burial entry, which gives his address as *Stowford Barton*. His death certificate* describes him as a *farmer* and states that he died at Stowford on 25 May 1859 of *old age*.

*Reported by Mrs. Pauline Johnson, Superintendent Registrar at Tavistock.

6.12 JOHN TAPSON OF STOWFORD, AGRICULTURAL LABOURER

John, the only son of John Tapson, whose mother, Mary, had died when he was two years old, was married at Stoke Damerel:

4 Sep 1840 ***John Tapson*** *Full Bach Labourer 10 Duke St*
(Father: John Tapson, Labourer)
Elizabeth Doidge *Full Spin 20 Duke St*
(Father: Roger Doidge, Labourer)
in the presence of Christopher Tapson & George Nettle

The eldest son of John and Elizabeth was baptized at Marystow:

2 May 1841 Nicholas son of John & Elizabeth Tapson, Twelve Acres, Farmer

Nicholas was included in the census return of 6/7 June 1841 (page 184). A second child, Mary, was baptized on 16 April 1843 at Stowford, although the address of the family was still given as *Maristow*. John and Elizabeth with their two children then moved to Broadwoodwidger, the parish immediately to the north of Stowford parish, where their third child was baptized:

1 Dec 1844 John son of John & Elizabeth Tapson, Higher Goatacre, Farmer

The next births to be registered (Holsworthy R.D.) were of James in 1846, Q3, and of Jane Doidge in 1848, Q2. They were probably baptized at Broadwoodwidger (see 1851 census), but the register of that parish for 1846 onwards is still held by the rector of Lifton. Then, in 1850, Q3, the birth of Charlotte was registered (Tavistock R.D.); there is no baptismal entry for her in the parish registers of Stowford or Marystow, although Stowford is given as her birthplace in the 1851 census for that parish (PRO HO107/1884 Fo. 344), in which all the children of John and Elizabeth are recorded:

2 Down Park

John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*39*	*Ag.Lab.*	*Devon,*	*Stowford*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*38*		*„*	*Marystow*
Nicholas Tapson	*Son*		*10*		*„*	*„*
Mary Tapson	*Dau*		*8*		*„*	*„*
John Tapson	*Son*		*6*		*„*	*Broadwood*
James Tapson	*Son*		*4*		*„*	*„*
Jane D. Tapson	*Dau*		*2*		*„*	*„*
Charlotte Tapson	*Dau*		*8 mo.*		*„*	*Stowford*

John, whose actual date of birth is given in the Stowford parish register as 29 March 1812, would have had his 39th birthday the day before the census, which was held on 30/31 March 1851.

Another daughter, Elizabeth, was baptized at Stowford in the following year, on 6 May 1852, the same day that her father was buried at the age of 40. John's address was recorded as *Down Park, Stowford*, in both Elizabeth's baptismal entry and his own burial entry. John is described on his death certificate as a *labourer*; he died on 3 May 1852 of *pneumonia*.*

The birthplace of John's wife, Elizabeth, was recorded in the 1851 census return as *Marystow*, and her father's name was given in her marriage entry as *Roger Doidge, Labourer*. Now John's aunt Elizabeth had married a *Roger Doidge, Labourer* (page 183); they lived at Marystow and had a daughter Elizabeth, baptized at Stowford on 28 June 1812 (page 184), who would have been 38 at the time of the 1851 census held on 30/31 March 1851, precisely the age entered for John's wife. The inevitable conclusion must be that John married his cousin at Stoke Damerel in 1840. At that time large numbers of people were being attracted to the rapidly expanding Municipal Borough of Devonport which had grown up within the ancient parish of Stoke Damerel (page 217); John Tapson and Elizabeth Doidge had probably gone there to seek work and to enjoy the excitement of a busy town after the quiet farming community in which they had grown up. Christopher Tapson, one of the witnesses at their wedding, would therefore have been an uncle of both bride and groom; he had just completed a period of service in the Plymouth Division of the Royal Marines, and had himself been married in the old parish church of Stoke Damerel just five years earlier (page 198).

*Reported by Mrs. Pauline Johnson, Superintendent Registrar at Tavistock.

By the time of the 1861 census for Stowford (PRO RG9/1464 Fo. 119) John's widow, Elizabeth, had moved with her daughters to Stowford Barton; her sons had all left home:•

Barton

Elizabeth Tapson	*Head*	*Wid*	*48*	*Farmers Wife*	*Devon,*	*Marystow*
Mary Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*18*	*Dress Maker*	*„*	*„*
Jane Tapson	*Dau*		*12*	*Scholar*	*„*	*Broadwoodwidger*
Charlotte Tapson	*Dau*		*10*	*„*	*„*	*Stowford*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Dau*		*9*	*„*	*„*	*„*

According to her death certificate* Elizabeth died on 13 April 1862 of *phthisis* (i.e. tuberculosis); she is described as the *widow of John Tapson, a farm labourer*, and was 49 years old. Her funeral took place on 4 May 1862 at Stowford; in the burial entry her address was given as *Stowford Barton*, which is where her father-in-law, John Tapson, had died three years before (page 184).

The burial at Stowford on 3 July 1862 must have been that of the second son of John and Elizabeth, who had left home by the time of the 1861 census and who would have been in his 18th year when he died; his burial entry records his age as 18. And the eldest daughter of John and Elizabeth was the only Mary Tapson whose birth was registered in Devon in the period around 1843 to whom the following burial at Stoke Damerel could apply; she would have been just 24 when she died:

12 Apr 1867 Mary Tapson Albert Hospital 24 (died 11 Apr 1867)

And James, the third son of John and Elizabeth, would have been just about 21 when, soon after Mary's death, the death of *James Tapson, Aged 21* was registered in 1867, Q3 (Bethnal Green R.D.); he was the only James Tapson whose birth had been registered round about 1846.

Jane Doidge also made her way to London, where she appears in the 1881 census return for Kensington (PRO RG11/48 Fo. 56) at *4 Roland Gardens*, the household of a wine merchant George A. Warre, a British subject born in Portugal, and his family:

Jane Tapson Serv Un 31 Cook Devon, Shuford

Jane Doidge would have been 32 years old;• no marriage or death was subsequently registered for her. The 1881 census (PRO RG11/2168 Fo. 201) for Torquay includes *Charlotte*, a *Ladys Maid Servant* aged 30, as a patient in the Western Hospital for Consumption. Charlotte's death was registered in 1885, Q4 (Newton Abbot R.D.), her age being given as 35, which was precisely the age of the third daughter of John and Elizabeth; so she probably died of tuberculosis, as had her mother.

The 1881 census for Llanfaes, Anglesey (PRO RG11/5572 Fo. 33) lists the household at *Baron Hill* of Sir R. Williams Bulkeley, *JP & DL, Co of Anglesey,* which presumably means that he was a Justice of the Peace and Deputy Lieutenant for the County of Anglesey. The household also included his wife, daughter, brother-in-law and sister-in-law, together with 24 staff comprising a governess, two butlers, an under butler, a first footman, a second footman, a second coachman, two ponyboy grooms, a housekeeper, four housemaids, three laundrymaids, a stillroom maid, a kitchenmaid, a scullerymaid, two lady's maids, a cook and a gardener. One of the staff was:

Elizabeth Tapson Un 28 Ladys Maid Devon, Tipton

The youngest daughter of John and Elizabeth would have been 28 years old when this census was taken; it would seem that she had gone into the same occupation as her sister Charlotte. *Tipton* was probably intended to be Lifton, the nearest sizable village to Stowford. Llanfaes is about five miles up the coast-road from the Menai Bridge, which links Anglesey with the mainland near Bangor in north Wales. Elizabeth later moved to Torquay, where her sister Charlotte was living before her death;• she was married in the church of Tor Mohun (Tormoham, the mother church of Torquay):

12 Oct 1893 ***William Winget*** *50 Widower Printer Tor Mohun*
(Father: William Winget, Carpenter)
Elizabeth Tapson *40 Spinster Torquay*
(Father: John Tapson, Farmer)
by Licence in the presence of John Jackman & Edith Adeline Waite

Elizabeth should have given her age as 41. John Jackman may have been her second cousin (page 190) named in the wills of his uncles William and Robert (pages 188, 189).

*Reported by Mrs. Pauline Johnson, Superintendent Registrar at Tavistock.

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

6.13 NICHOLAS TAPSON OF WOOLWICH, MASTER TAILOR

The marriage of Nicholas, the eldest son of John and Elizabeth, to Emma Clay was registered in 1866, Q1 (Islington R.D.). The birth of their first child was registered at Hackney:

12 Dec 1866 Mark, son of Nicholas Tapson, Tailor Master, & Emma Tapson, formerly Clay, 4 Romsey Terrace, South Hackney

The birth of an Emma Tapson was registered in 1868, Q3 (Woolwich R.D.); although, to establish with certainty whether she was another child of Nicholas and Emma, her birth certificate would be needed, her name suggests that she probably was, especially since it is known that Nicholas and Emma were living in Woolwich by 1887, when Nicholas was listed in Kelly's Post Office Directory for Kent:

Tapson N. Herbert road, Woolwich

Emma's death was registered in 1876, Q3 (Woolwich R.D.); her age was given as 7.

Both Nicholas and his wife were included in Kelly's 1888 Post Office Directory for London, Southern Suburbs:

Tapson Nicholas, tailor, 143 Herbert road, Woolwich

Tapson Emma (Mrs), dressma, 143 Herbert road, Woolwich

and they were shown at the same address in the 1891 census for Plumstead (PRO RG12/536 Fo. 88):

143 Herbert Rd

Nicholas Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*50*	*Tailor*	*Devon, Stowford*
Emma Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*53*	*Dressmaker*	*Middlesex, Hanks*(?)

Nicholas's age given here establishes that he was the eldest son of John and Elizabeth, born very nearly 50 years earlier. [Nicholas the son of Ebsworthy and Catherine, who was about 10 months older, was described as a hawker in 1861 (page 196), so there can be no confusion between them.] Nicholas was actually born at Marystow; his mistake about his place of birth was no doubt due to the fact that his parents moved to Broadwoodwidger when he was still a small child, but had settled in Stowford by the time he was 9 years old (page 185).

Nicholas's name does not appear in Kelly's 1894 Post Office Directory for London, Southern Suburbs, though his wife is still listed:

Tapson Emma (Mrs), dresma, 204 Herbert rd, Woolwich

Nicholas's death was registered in 1913, Q4 (Woolwich R.D.), when his age was correctly given as 72. The *Emma Tapson, Aged 82* whose death was registered in 1918, Q2 (Wandsworth R.D.), was probably his widow, though her age, to be consistent with that given in the 1891 census, should have been recorded as 80 or 81.*

6.14 WILLIAM TAPSON OF LAUNCESTON, PLASTERER

Nicholas's son William would have been just about 24 years old when the wedding took place at the parish church of Launceston:

13 Sep 1819 ***William Tapson*** *Sojourner of this Parish, Bachelor, &* ***Ann Shaplin*** *of this Parish, Spinster, by Banns in the presence of Mary Tapson and Catherine Tapson*

The wedding was followed by a baptism in the same church:

11 Nov 1821 John son of W^m^ & Ann Tapson, South Gate, Mason

The 1841 census for Launceston (PRO HO107/154/1 Fo. 15) shows that William and Ann had moved with their son from South Gate:

Angell Hill

William Tapson	*40-44*	*Plasterer*	*Not born in Cornwall*
Ann Tapson	*50-54*		*Born in Cornwall*
John Tapson	*15-19*	*Plasterer*	*Born in Cornwall*

Ann Tapson, Launceston was buried at Stowford on 23 September 1845.

*See Appendix VI (Addenda).

The 1851 census (PRO HO107/1899 Fo. 364) shows John still living with his father:

Angell Hill

William Tapson	*Head*	*Widr*	*50*	*Plasterer*	*Devon, Stowford*
John Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*28*	—	*Cornwall, Lanson*

Nicholas's son William would have been 55 and John 29 at the time of this census. John's place of birth is entered as *Lanson*, the name of the town spelt in the way it is still pronounced.

The Will of William Tapson dated 13 January 1859

This is the Will of me William Tapson of Angell Hill in the Borough of Launceston in the County of Cornwall Plasterer I devise All that my Freehold Dwelling house situate at Southgate within the Borough of Launceston aforesaid and now occupied by James Gregory unto and to the use of my Housekeeper Mary Davey Widow, her heirs and assigns for ever But I charge the said Dwelling house in exoneration of the residue of my real Estate with the payment of all my Mortgage and other debts I devise All those my Two Dwelling houses situate in Angel Hill aforesaid, and now respectively occupied by Thomas Kittow and myself, unto the said Mary Davey during her life And from and immediately after her decease I devise the two last mentioned Dwelling houses unto and to the use of my Son John George Tapson his heirs and assigns for ever Provided always that if at the death of the said Mary Davey, my said Son shall have died and there shall be no issue of him then living Then from the decease of the said Mary Davey I devise the said Dwelling house now occupied by Thomas Kittow unto and to the use of my Nephew John Jackman Son of the deceased Sister Anne, his heirs and assigns for ever And the said Dwelling house now in my own occupation unto and to the use of my Niece Mary Raymond daughter of my Brother Christopher her heirs and assigns for ever I bequeath unto the said Mary Davey all my personal Estate And I appoint her Executrix of this my Will I devise unto the said Mary Davey her heirs and assigns All Estates vested in me upon any trust subject to the equities affecting the same respectively In Witness whereof I have hereto set my hand this thirteenth day of January one thousand eight hundred and fifty nine *William Tapson*

Within two weeks of drawing up his will William was dead; he died on 25 January and was buried at Stowford five days later. The will was proved at Bodmin on 25 February 1859, effects being valued at *under £200*. One can only speculate why William's son, John, then aged 37, was to inherit nothing until the death of Mary Davey — and then only two of William's three houses and none of his personal estate. One suspects that, unless relations between William and his son were really bad, then Mary, whom William also named as (sole) executrix, had either manipulated a sick and confused old man on his deathbed to her own ends or else that her services as a housekeeper had far exceeded the call of duty. John's second name, George, was not included in his baptismal entry. By mentioning his brother Christopher and Christopher's daughter, Mary Raymond, the will confirms that William was indeed Nicholas's son; but he would have been only 63 at the time of his funeral, not 66 as stated in the burial register. The will also establishes that it was William's sister Ann who married John Jackman at Stowford on 14 July 1826 (page 183), that they had issue, and that Ann was already dead by 1859.•

The Jenny buried at Stowford in 1855 was another of Nicholas's daughters; she would have been 61. At the time of the 1851 census she would have been 57 and her sister Mary 64, so it must be these two daughters of Nicholas listed in the return for Boyton (PRO HO107/1899 Fo. 217), although Jenny's name appears as Jane:

Dutchy Arms

Humphry Autridge	*Head*	*Mar*	*76*	*Innkeeper*	*Devon, Werrington*
Mary Autridge	*Wife*	*Mar*	*64*		*„ Stowford*
Jane Tapson	*Wife's sister*	*Un*	*57*	*Inn Servant*	*„ „*

Boyton village is about four miles north of Launceston, and Werrington lies between Launceston and Boyton. This return provides confirmation that it was Nicholas's daughter Mary who married Humphry Autridge at Stowford in 1824 (page 183). Cornwall has been a duchy since about 1330, when it was given to the eldest son of the reigning monarch: hence the (misspelt) name of the hostelry.

• See Appendix VI (Addenda) & Appendix VII (Further Addenda)

6.15 ROBERT TAPSON OF EGLOSKERRY & LAUNCESTON, INNKEEPER

The parish register of Egloskerry, Cornwall, records the marriage:

31 Mar 1840 ***Robert Tapson*** *Full Widower Innkeeper Egloskerry*
Catherine Cullis *Full Spinster Servant Egloskerry*
in the presence of Chr. W. Madun(?) & Martha Cullis

Three years before this wedding there had been a burial at Egloskerry:

15 Jul 1837 Susan Tapson Tregear House 44

This Susan, born about 1793, would have been four or five years younger than Robert; it seems likely that she was his first wife, since he was described as a widower when he married Catherine Cullis.

The village of Egloskerry is about four miles west of Launceston. The parish immediately to the west of Egloskerry parish is Laneast; its register contains the marriage entry:

9 Jul 1835 ***Robert Tapson*** *of this Parish and* ***Susanna Cullis*** *of this Parish by Banns in the presence of Thomas Blyth & Richard P. Burnard*

Nicholas's son Robert would have been 37 at the time of this wedding — probably his first.

A year after Robert's second wedding a baptism took place at Egloskerry:

7 Mar 1841 Robert son of Robert & Catherine Tapson, Ch. Town, Innkeeper

The family is recorded in the 1841 census return for Egloskerry (PRO HO107/134/1 Fo. 12):

Robert Tapson	*40-44*	*Inn Keeper*	*Not born in Cornwall*
Catherine Tapson	*25-29*		*Born in Cornwall*
Robert Tapson	*3 mo.*		*Born in Cornwall*

By 1851 the family had moved to Launceston, where they were included in the census return for that parish (PRO HO107/1899 Fo. 341):

South Gate

Robert Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*52*	*Inn Keeper*	*Devon, Stowford*
Catherine Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*39*	—	*Cornwall, Egloskerry*
Robert Tapson	*Son*		*10*	*Scholar*	*„ „*

together with a female *servant* and eight male *lodgers*. His place of birth confirms that this Robert was Nicholas's son, though he would have been 53. Catherine would have been born about 1811.

SLATER'S DIRECTORY of about 1852/3, in its section on Launceston, includes under the heading *Taverns & Public Houses*:

Plymouth and Devonport Inn, Robert Tapson, Race hill

So it would seem that Robert had taken over his cousin's inn sometime between 1847, when William was named as the landlord in Williams' Commercial Directory (page 174), and the 1851 census. In Kelly's Post Office Directory for 1856, under Launceston *Traders*, Robert is still shown as the landlord:

Tapson Robert, Plymouth & Devonport inn Race Hill

<u>The Will of Robert Tapson dated 15 January 1858</u>

This is the last Will and Testament of me Robert Tapson of Launceston in the County of Cornwall Innkeeper I give and bequeath all my Stock in Trade Book and other debts Wines Liquors Spirits Beer and Utensils and all my household furniture plate Linen China Glass books Paints Pictures, Beds bedding and effects and all consumable provisions and all monies, monies in the funds, Securities for money and all monies due from any friendly Society at the time of my death ..... unto my friends John Jackman the Younger of Milford in the Parish of Stowford in the County of Devon Yeoman and John Philp of Launceston in the County of Cornwall Veterinary Surgeon ..... hereinafter denominated "Trustees" Upon Trust for the absolute use and enjoyment thereof by my dear Wife Catherine during her life and from and immediately after her decease Upon trust in case my Son Robert Tapson shall not then have attained the age of twenty one years to sell and convert the same into money and to invest the proceeds of such Sale in the names or name of my said Trustees or Trustee upon Government or real Securities in England ..... And to apply the annual income to arise from such

invested monies for or towards the maintenance and advancement in the world of my said Son Robert until he shall attain the age of twenty one years And when he shall have attained the age of twenty one years ..... to pay unto my said Son the said invested monies ..... I devise and bequeath all my Freehold and Copyhold Messuages and tenements lands and hereditaments with the appurtenances situate and being in the Borough of Launceston aforesaid And all other my real Estate ..... unto the said John Jackman and John Philp ..... To the use of my said Wife during her life and after her decease To the use of ..... my said Son Robert ..... My Will is that if my said Son Robert shall die during the lifetime of my said Wife without leaving lawful issue then the whole of my real and personal Estate shall vest in my said Wife her heirs executors administrators and assigns absolutely ..... I appoint the said John Jackman and John Philp and my said Wife Catherine Tapson Executors and Executrix of this my Will and Guardians of my said Son during his Minority In Witness whereof I have at the end of this my Will set my hand this fifteenth day of January one thousand eight hundred and fifty eight *Robert Tapson*

On 14 February 1858, a month after he made his will, Robert died, aged 60. His son, Robert, was then 17. Robert was buried at Launceston:

19 Feb 1858 Robert Tapson Devonport Inn 60

Robert's will was proved at Launceston on 28 April 1858; it was only the second Tapson will to be proved in the civil probate court. Robert's effects were valued at *under £200*.

One of the trustees named in the will, *John Jackman the younger of Milford*, was Robert's nephew who would have been about 30 years old when the will was written; he was the son of Robert's sister Ann (page 188). Ann would have been 65 at the time of the 1851 census, which is the age given for her in the return for Stowford (PRO HO107/1884 Fo. 353):

Milford

John Jackman	*Head*	*Mar*	*60*	*Farmer of 180 Acres employing 5 labourers*	*Devon, Lifton*
Ann Jackman	*Wife*	*Mar*	*65*	*„*	*Stowford*
John Jackman	*Son*	*Un*	*23*	*Farmer's son*	*„ „*

Also included were one female *general servant* and three male *agricultural labourers*. Ann died on 25 November 1854; the headstone of Ann and her husband is in the Tapson family plot at Stowford.

The 1861 census return for Launceston (PRO RG9/1520 Fo. 18) shows that after her husband's death Catherine took over the running of the inn:

South Gate

Catherine Tapson	*Head*	*Wid*	*49*	*Innkeeper*	*Cornwall, Egloskerry*
Robert Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*20*	*„*	*„*

together with a *Traveller (Bookseller)*, a *Manservant* and a female *House Servant*. The age given for Catherine in the 1861 census is consistent with her having been born about 1811 (page 189), as is her age recorded in the burial entry in the Launceston parish register:

20 Jun 1866 Catherine Tapson Race Hill 54

The 1871 census return for Launceston (PRO RG10/2225 Fo. 13) records:

Southgate Street

Robert Tapson	*Head*	*Un*	*26*	*Vagrant*	*Cornwall, Egloskerry*

If this Robert was the son of Robert and Catherine, as seems likely, his age would have been 30; it is perhaps pertinent that no occupation was given for him in the 1861 census. He was the only inhabitant of the premises in 1871, but it is not clear whether he was still living in the inn. [The Egloskerry register was not properly kept from about 1840 to 1865, so it is impossible to determine whether another Robert was baptized there about 1844 who would then have been 26 in 1871; however, no such Robert was registered in the Launceston R.D. as having been born about 1844, except for the son of John and Elizabeth Maddever in 1843, Q1, who was buried at Lawhitton 11 months later (page 178). So it seems fairly certain that the *vagrant* was the 30 year old son of Robert and Catherine who, his mother being dead, would have inherited his father's properties.]•

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

6.16 EBSWORTHY TAPSON OF STOWFORD & EXETER, OSTLER

The parish register of South Petherwin, Cornwall, records the marriage:

6 Dec 1836 ***Ebsworthy Tapson,*** *Bachelor of the Parish of Stowford, &*
Catherine Lang, *Spinster of the Parish of South Petherwin,*
by Banns in the presence of Caroline ..... & John Tapson

South Petherwin is the parish adjoining Launceston parish to its south-west. The baptisms of their first four children, Mary in 1837, Robert in 1839, Nicholas in 1840, and Ebsworthy in 1842, are recorded in the Stowford parish register, in which the address of Ebsworthy and Caroline is given variously as *Parish Land* and *Spry Town*. Ebsworthy must have taken over the lease of Over Spry after the death of his mother in 1835, the year before his marriage; the lease entered into by his mother was due to expire on Ladyday 1840 (page 183).

The 1841 census for Stowford (PRO HO107/233/12 Fo. 5) has the entry:

Spry Town			
Ebsworthy Tapson	*40-44*	*Farmer*	*Born in Devonshire*
Catherine Tapson	*25-29*		*Not born in Devonshire*
Robert Tapson	*2*		*Born in Devonshire*
Nicholas Tapson	*11 mo.*		*Born in Devonshire*

Ebsworthy would have been 39. Mary, his daughter, was away from home, and his son Ebsworthy had not yet been born.

The next child of Ebsworthy and Catherine was baptized at South Petherwin, where they had been married:

12 May 1844 James son of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson, Trevozah, Farmer

and then another daughter was baptized at Bideford in north-west Devon:

9 Aug 1846 Charlotte dau of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson, Honestone Lane, Publican

The 1851 census for the parish of St. Mary Major, Exeter (PRO HO107/1868 Fo. 348) shows that the family had moved once again:

Sun Street					
Ebsworthy Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*50*	*Mason's Lab*	*Devon, Stowford*
Catherine Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*37*		*Cornwall, South Petherwin*
Ebsworthy Tapson	*Son*		*8*		*Devon, Stowford*
James Tapson	*Son*		*6*		*Cornwall, South Petherwin*
Charlotte Tapson	*Dau*		*4*		*Devon, Bideford*

The same census return (PRO HO107/1868 Fo. 347) records that the eldest child, Mary, was working as a servant at the local hostelry (compare folio numbers):

Sun Inn					
John Howard	*Head*	*Mar*	*57*	*Innkeeper*	*Devon, Morchard Bishop*
Agnes Howard	*Wife*	*Mar*	*56*		*„ Colyton*
Joel Hayman	*Serv*	*Un*	*41*	*Brewer*	*„ Farway*
Mary Tapson	*Serv*	*Un*	*13*	*House Serv*	*„ „*
Charles Tapson	*Visitor*		*4*		*„ „*

Mary's age was correctly given. Charlotte would have been 4 and seems to have been staying overnight with her sister; she may have been known as *Charlie*, and the enumerator, obviously confused, at first entered her age in the *female* column but then crossed it out and transferred it to the *male* column. For good measure Charlotte was also entered in Ebsworthy's household, her usual place of residence. Joel Hayman was born in Farway (near Sidmouth); John Howard probably did not know the Tapson's place of birth and thought Farway was good enough for the enumerator.

By the time of the 1851 census the two eldest sons, Robert and Nicholas, had left home and were working on farms: Robert, aged 12, was at South Petherwin, where his parents had been married, and Nicholas, nearly 11, at Tetcott (about 7 miles north of Launceston).

The 1851 census for South Petherwin (PRO HO107/1899 Fo. 432) shows Robert working for a farmer named *Thomas Gillbart* at his farm *Penfoot*:

Robert Tapson Serv 12 Farm Labourer Devon, Stowford

and that for Tetcott (PRO H0107/1896 Fo. 385) includes Nicholas in the household of another farmer, *Richard Drown*, at *Higher Lane Farm*:

Nicholas Tapson Serv 11 Devon, Stowford

Another child of Ebsworthy and Catherine was baptized at Exeter in the church of St. Mary Major; her birth was not registered:

21 Aug 1853 Sarah dau of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson, Guinea Street, Labourer

The following year a funeral service was held for James in the same church:

4 Jun 1854 James Tapson Sun Street 13

Jame's age was correctly recorded as 10 in the register of the St. Bartholomew New Cemetery where he was buried. Three years later another funeral service was held in St. Mary Major:

16 Sep 1857 Catherine Tapson Sun Street 9 weeks

Catherine was also buried at the St. Bartholomew New Cemetery. Her name, the Sun Street address, and the fact that, like James, she was buried in the St. Bartholomew New Cemetery after a funeral service in St. Mary Major, all suggest that Catherine was another daughter of Ebsworthy and Catherine (but her birth certificate would be needed to confirm this).

Ebsworthy would have been 56 at the time of his funeral service at St. Mary Major:

31 Jan 1858 Ebsworthy Tapson Preston 57

Sun Street no longer exists, but Guinea Street and Preston Street are very close to each other. The Preston Street address occurs again in another baptismal entry in the register of St. Mary Major:

1 Aug 1862 Charlotte dau of Abraham & Catherine Tapson, Preston St., Ostler

It seems likely that *Abraham* was written in error for *Ebsworthy* and that Charlotte was his daughter, then 16, baptized at Bideford on 9 August 1846 (page 191); since she had not died (there is no death certificate for her between 1851, when she was listed in the census, and the date of this baptism) the probable explanation is that she believed she had not already been baptized. Ebsworthy's employment as an ostler is again mentioned on the marriage certificates of two of his sons (pages 195, 196).•

Catherine's death was registered in 1866, Q2 (Exeter R.D.); her age was given as 54, which is reasonably commensurate with that given in the 1851 census. And Sarah would have been 17 at the time of her funeral service in the Exeter church of St. Sidwell:

6 Mar 1871 Sarah Tapson Workhouse 17

Presumably Sarah had entered the workhouse because, with both parents dead, she had had nobody to look after her when she became ill. She was buried in the Exeter Cemetery.

A baptism at St George's church, Exeter:

3 Mar 1870 Alice Bessie dau of Mary Tapson, Jews Court •

was followed by a marriage in the United Parishes of St. John and St. George, Exeter:

1 Apr 1875 ***John Blackmore*** *35 Bachelor Labourer Coffins Court, St George*
(Father: William Blackmore, Labourer)
Mary Tapson *40 Spinster Coffins Court, St George*
(Father: Ebsworthy Tapson, Farmer)
by Banns in the presence of George Gay, Emma Jane French & Ellen Voysey

Mary is recorded with her husband and illegitimate child in the 1881 census for the parish of St. Mary Major, Exeter (PRO RG11/2151 Fo. 113):

John Blackmore	*Head*	*Mar*	*35*	*Maltster*	*Devon, Crediton*
Mary J. Blackmore	*Wife*	*Mar*	*43*		*Cornwall, Stover*
Allice Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*11*	*Scholar*	*Devon, Exeter*

Mary would have been 43 at the time of the census, but only 37 when she married; John Blackmore's ages are also haywire. *Stover* should be *Stowford*, in *Devon*! Alice would have been close to her 17th birthday when the death of an *Ellice Tapson, 16* was registered (St. Thomas R.D.) in 1887, Q1.

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

6.17 ROBERT TAPSON OF NEWTON ABBOT, FURNITURE BROKER

Robert, the eldest son of Ebsworthy and Catherine, who was a farm servant in 1851 (page 192), appears in the 1861 census for Exeter, St. Mary Major (PRO RG9/1395 Fo. 63):

Preston Street

Thomas Soper	*Head*	*Mar*	*51*	*Stone Mason*	*Devon,*	*Exeter*
Elizabeth Soper	*Wife*	*—*	*53*		*„*	*„*
John Soper	*Son*	*Un*	*27*	*Mason*	*„*	*„*
Elizabeth Soper	*Dau*	*Un*	*20*	*Book Binder*	*„*	*Topsham*
William Soper	*Son*		*17*	*Laberor*	*„*	*„*
Robert Tapson	*Lodger*	*Un*	*22*	*General Dealer*	*„*	*Lifton*

Like his sister Mary (page 192), Robert was vague about his place of birth, which was Stowford, near Lifton; however, he gave his correct age.

The wedding of Robert and the daughter of his erstwhile landlord was held at the church of St. Mary Major, Exeter:

4 Jul 1861 ***Robert Tapson*** *22 Bachelor Rag-Collecter King St*
(Father: Ebsworthy Tapson, Servant)
Elizabeth Soper *21 Spinster Preston St*
(Father: Thomas Soper, Plasterer)
by Banns in the presence of Nicholas Tapson & Elizabeth Soper

The wedding was followed by a baptism, also at St. Mary Major:

15 Oct 1862 Amelia Charlotte dau of Robert & Elizabeth Tapson, Preston St., Hawker

by two further baptisms at the church of St. Leonard, Wolborough, Newton Abbot:

28 Jul 1865 William Robert son of Robert & Elizabeth Tapson, Newton Abbot, Broker
26 Aug 1870 Florence Edith dau of Robert & Elizabeth Tapson, East Street, Broker

by a baptism at the church of St. Paul, Wolborough:

5 Apr 1867 Alfred John son of Robert & Elizabeth Tapson, Newton Abbot, Broker

and by two burials:

16 Jul 1867 Alfred John Tapson Newton Abbot 4 months
26 Sep 1869 Nicholas William Tapson Newton Abbot 3 months

Nicholas William, for whom no baptismal entry has been found, was probably another child of Robert and Elizabeth, though he may have been a son of Robert's brother Ebsworthy who had also moved to Newton Abbot (page 195); his birth certificate would settle the issue.

The town of Newton Abbot was formed out of the old parishes of Wolborough and Highweek; Robert's family is shown in the 1871 census for Wolborough (PRO RG10/2084 Fo. 9):

19 East Street

Robert Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*33*	*Broker*	*Devon,*	*Lifton*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*30*		*„*	*Topsham*
Amelia C. Tapson	*Dau*		*8*	*Scholar*	*„*	*Exeter*
William R. Tapson	*Son*		*6*		*„*	*Newton Abbot*

However, Florence Edith seems to have been put out to a wet-nurse living nearby, for she appears on Folio 7 of the same return:

10 Richards' Court

John Stitson	*Head*	*Mar*	*55*	*Carpenter*	*Devon,*	*Newton Abbot*
Mary Stitson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*49*	*Washerwoman*	*„*	*Exeter*
Florence E. Tapson	*Nurse Child*		*8 mo.*		*„*	*Newton Abbot*

Robert is listed in Kelly's 1873 directory for Devon both under *Auctioneers* and under *Furniture Brokers & Dealers*:

Tapson Robert, Queen st, Newton Abbot

A further baptism took place at St. Paul's church:

12 Sep 1872 Jessie Melinda dau of Robert & Elizabeth Tapson, East St, Auctioneer

and another at St. Leonard's:

24 Jul 1879 Mabel Fanny dau of Robert & Elizabeth Tapson, Wolborough St, Town Crier

So Robert had added yet another string to his bow! Rose Ellen, buried at Wolborough:

20 Feb 1876 Rose Ellen Tapson Newton Abbot 7 months

may have been Robert's daughter, though possibly Ebsworthy's; no baptismal entry has yet been found.

The family is listed in the 1881 census for Wolborough (PRO RG11/2166 Fo.65):

62 Wolborough St.

Robert Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*41*	*Furniture Broker*	*Devon,*	*Lifton*	
Elizabeth Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*40*		*„*	*Topsham*	
Amelia C. Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*18*	*Dom Servant(?)*	*„*	*Exeter*	
William R Tapson	*Son*		*15*	*Bill Poster*	*„*	*Newton Abbot*	
Florence E. Tapson	*Dau*		*10*	*Scholar*	*„*	*„*	*„*
Jessie Melinda Tapson	*Dau*		*8*	*„*	*„*	*„*	*„*
Mabel Tapson	*Dau*		*2*		*„*	*„*	*,*

Emanuel, included in Robert's household in the 1891 census return for Wolborough (PRO RG12/1701 Fo. 88), was a son of his (then deceased) brother Ebsworthy:

62 Wolborough St.

Robert Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*51*	*Furniture Broker & Bill Poster*	*Devon,*	*Lifton*	
Elizabeth Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*50*		*„*	*Topsham*	
William R. Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*25*	*Cabman*	*„*	*Newton Abbot*	
Florence E. Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*20*	*Drapers assistant*	*„*	*„*	*„*
Melinda J. Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*18*	*Milliner*	*„*	*„*	*„*
Mabel F. Tapson	*Dau*		*12*	*Scholar*	*„*	*„*	*„*
Emanuel I. Tapson	*Nephew*		*14*	*„*	*„*	*„*	*„*

Three of Robert's daughters were married at Wolborough:

25 May 1885 ***Phillip James Major*** *23 Bachelor Carpenter*
Newton Abbot (Father: James Major, Carpenter)
Amelia Charlotte Tapson *22 Spinster*
Newton Abbot (Father: Robert Tapson, Broker)
by Banns in the presence of Robert Henry Prowse & Sarah Mary Major

31 Aug 1898 ***Edwin West*** *22 Bachelor Clerk*
Grays Inn Road, London (Father: John West, Printer)
Jessie Melinda Tapson *26 Spinster*
2 Landsdon Villa, Newton Abbot (Father: Robert Tapson, Broker)
by Banns in the presence of Henry D Garrett & William Robert Tapson

20? Aug 1899 ***Edward Charles Brooks*** *26 Bachelor Carpenter*
107 East Street, Newton Abbot (Father: John Brooks, Rope Maker)
Florence Edith Tapson *29 Spinster*
2 Landsdown Villa, Newton Abbot (Father: Robert Tapson, Broker & Billposter)
by Banns in the presence of George Widdon & William Robert Tapson

William Robert was married in 1900, Q2 (Newton Abbot R.D.), but not in either of the Newton Abbot parishes of Wolborough or Highweek,* and Mabel Fanny in 1901, Q3 (St. Giles R.D.).

Robert, who would have been 55, and Elizabeth, were both buried at Wolborough:

24 Nov 1894 Robert Tapson 54
7 Apr 1910 Elizabeth Tapson 20 Union St, Newton Abbot 69

*See Appendix VI (Addenda).

6.18 EBSWORTHY TAPSON OF NEWTON ABBOT, HAWKER

Ebsworthy also moved to Newton Abbot and was married in Wolborough parish:

22 Jul 1867 ***Ebsworthy Tapson*** *Full Bachelor Hawker Newton Abbot*
(Father: Ebsworthy Tapson, Ostler)
Jane Ash *Full Spinster Newton Abbot*
(Father: William Ash, Carpenter)
by Banns in the presence of John William Ro(?) & William Roberts

A baptism had already taken place at St. Paul's church, Wolborough:

24 Jan 1867 Absworthy son of Absworthy & Jane Tapson, Newton, Hawker

the birth had been registered in 1866, Q4. Two more baptisms, at St. Leonard's, followed the wedding:

23 Mar 1868 Ellen Charlotte dau of Ebsworthy & Jane Tapson, Newton Abbot, Hawker
22 Sep 1870 Catherine Margaret dau of Absworthy & Jane Tapson, Newton Abbot, Hawker

Ebsworthy and Ellen Charlotte were both buried at Wolborough:

31 Jan 1867 Absworthy Tapson Newton Abbot 7 weeks
28 Mar 1868 Ellen Charlotte Tapson Newton Abbot 3 weeks

A son, James, included in the 1871 census for Wolborough (PRO RG10/2083 Fo. 91), was born two years before the wedding of Ebsworthy and Jane; his birth was registered in 1865, Q3 (Newton Abbot R.D.). Since no earlier marriage had been registered for Ebsworthy, it must be assumed that James too was his illegitimate son. The family are listed thus in the census return:

Wolborough St

Ebsworthy Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*30*	*General Dealer*	*Devon,*	*Stalford*
Jane Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*30*		*„*	*Chudleigh*
James Tapson	*Son*		*5*		*„*	*Wolborough*
Catherine M. Tapson	*Dau*		*7 mo.*		*„*	*„*

Ebsworthy's age should have been given as 28, and *Stalford* should be *Stowford*.

Another daughter was baptized at St. Paul's:

7 Mar 1872 Lily dau of Ebsworthy & Jane Tapson, Snellings Court, Hawker

but this baptism was soon followed by two more burials at Wolborough:

12 Mar 1872 Lily Tapson Newton Abbot 3 weeks
13 Feb 1873 Kate Margaret Tapson Newton Abbot 2

[It is not certain whether Nicholas William and Rose Ellen, buried in 1869 and 1876 (pages 193, 194), were Ebsworthy's children or children of his brother Robert.] Although James was now his only surviving child, Ebsworthy remained undeterred, for more baptisms followed at St. Leonard's:

29 May 1873 Robert son of Ebsworthy & Jane Tapson, Wolborough St., Hawker
7 Jan 1875 Jane dau of Ebsworthy & Jane Tapson, Wolborough St., Hawker
5 Jul 1877 Emanuel George son of Ebsworthy & Jane Tapson, Wolborough St., Hawker
4 Oct 1880 Sydney Reuben son of Ebsworthy & Jane Tapson, Wolborough St., Hawker
(born 7 Sep)

All the family appear in the 1881 census for Wolborough (PRO RG11/2166 Fo. 66):

66 Wolborough Street

Ebsworthy Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*38*	*Laborer*	*Devon,*	*Stowford*	
Jane Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*38*		*„*	*Chudleigh*	
James Tapson	*Son*		*15*	*Laborer*	*„*	*Newton Abbot*	
Robert Tapson	*Son*		*7*	*Scholar*	*„*	*„*	*„*
Jane Tapson	*Dau*		*5*	*„*	*„*	*„*	*„*
Emmanuel G. Tapson	*Son*		*4*	*„*	*„*	*„*	*„*
Sydney R. Tapson	*Son*		*7 mo*		*„*	*„*	*„*

Two years later the last child of Ebsworthy and Jane was baptized at St. Leonard's:

21 Jun 1883 Peter Francis son of Ebsworthy & Jane Tapson, Court, East St., Labourer

Ebsworthy was listed under *Hawkers* in Kelly's 1873 directory for Devonshire:

Tapson E. Wolboro' st. Newton Abbot

Ebsworthy, his wife, and their son Robert were all buried at Wolborough:

11 Aug 1887	*Jane Tapson*	*Newton Abbot*	*47*
27 Mar 1888	*Elsworthy Tapson*	*Newton Abbot*	*45*
10 Dec 1903	*Robert Tapson*		*30*

The ages of Ebsworthy and Robert are correctly recorded. And *James Tapson, Aged 25* whose death was registered in 1890, Q4 (Okehampton R.D.) must have been Ebsworthy's eldest son, who would have been 25 at the time; his was the only birth of a James Tapson registered around 1865.•

Jane, Ebsworthy's only daughter to survive infancy, was married at Wolborough:

24 Jun 1899 ***George Cleave Johnson*** *20 Bachelor Fireman*
.... Cottage, Newton Abbot (Father: William Edward Johnson, Gardener)
Jane Tapson *25 Spinster*
Wolborough, Newton Abbot (Father: Abraham Tapson, Labourer)
by Banns in the presence of Robert Tapson & James Johnson

6.19 NICHOLAS TAPSON OF HIGHAMPTON, HORSE DEALER & INNKEEPER

Nicholas, the second son of Ebsworthy and Catherine, was working on a farm at Tetcott in 1851 (page 192) but then moved back to Exeter, where he is found at the time of the 1861 census for the parish of St. Edmund (PRO RG9/1399 Fo. 62) as one of several lodgers in a household:

Tudor Street

William Whitfield	*Head*	*Mar*	*30*	*Laborer*	*Devon, Chagford*
Eliza Whitfield	*Wife*	*Mar*	*36*	*Laundress*	*Gloucestershire*
.....					
Nicholas Tapson	*Lodger*	*Un*	*20*	*Laborer*	*Devon, Bideford*

A few weeks later Nicholas had a Register Office wedding at Exeter:

30 May 1861 ***Nicholas Tapson*** *21 Bachelor Hawker (Earthenware)*
Tudor Street, Exeter (Father: Ebsworthy Tapson, deceased, Ostler)
Elizabeth Whitfield *21 Spinster Laundress*
Tudor Street, Exeter (Father: William Whitfield, Potato Merchant)
in the presence of George William Walrend & Mary Ann Nil(?)

Elizabeth had been included in the 1861 census for the parish of St Edmund (PRO RG9/1399 Fo. 63):

Tudor Street

William Whitfield	*Head*	*Mar*	*50*	*Trader—Potato Dealer*	*Devon, Chagford*
Elizabeth Whitfield	*Wife*	*Mar*	*50*		*„ „*
Elizabeth Whitfield	*Dau*		*19*		*„ Exeter*

Elizabeth's father and Nicholas's landlord were clearly related: both were born at Chagford.

Nicholas has a new *wife* in the 1881 census for Clawton (PRO RG11/2268 Fo. 53):

Herdicott Cross

William Drown	*Head*	*Mar*	*38*	*Farmer of 99 acres*	*Devon, Tetcott*
.....					
Nicholas Tapson	*Visitor*	*Mar*	*39*	*Horse Dealer*	*Devon, Lifton*
Julia Tapson	*„ (Wife)*	*Mar*	*24*		— —

Nicholas would have been 40 at the time of this census; he was obviously uncertain of his place of birth, Stowford, as was his brother Robert who also thought it was Lifton (page 193). Clawton is the parish immediately to the north of Tetcott parish where Nicholas was working in 1851 for a farmer, Richard Drown, at Higher Lane Farm (page 192). Richard Drown had a son William whose age in 1851 was given as 7 and who obviously was, in 1881, the farmer at Herdicott Cross; so it seems that he and Nicholas, who was slightly the older of the two, had remained friends over the years.

•See Appendix VI (Addenda).

Neither the death of Nicholas's first wife nor his second marriage seem to have been registered; this might be because Nicholas had been living abroad, but a more likely explanation is that he had separated from his wife and was not actually married to Julia. It may well have been his wife listed in the 1881 census return for the parish of St. Mary Steps, Exeter (PRO RG11/2154 Fo. 24):

Stepcote Street

Richard Clarke	*Head*	*Widr*	*50*	*General Dealer*	*Mary Steps, Exeter*
.....					
Elizabeth Tapson	*Boarder*	*Mar*	*36*	*Char Woman*	*St Edmunds, Exeter*

This Elizabeth, who is not described as a widow, was clearly not living with her husband. And the *St. Mary Steps* address makes it extremely likely that she was the Elizabeth buried at Exeter Cemetery:

11 Feb 1890 Elizabeth Tapson St. Mary Steps 47

Moreover, her place of birth was the parish in which Elizabeth Whitfield was living just before her wedding (page 196), and Elizabeth Whitfield's age given in the 1861 census return would imply that she would have been 47 or 48 at the time of this burial. [Elizabeth Whitfield's age was given as 8 in the 1851 census return for St. Edmund's (PRO HO107/1869 Fo. 432); this would be absolutely consistent with her being 47 at the time of the burial.] So, although this evidence may not prove conclusively that Nicholas and Julia were *living in sin*, it strongly suggests the probability.

The 1891 census shows Nicholas and Julia living at Highampton, which is about nine miles east of Holsworthy (PRO RG12/1754 Fo. 7):

Golden Inn

Nicholas Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*50*	*Innkeeper*	*Devon,*	*Sourton*
Julia M. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*35*		*„*	*Sidbury*
Clement Webber	*Bro in Law*	*Un*	*30*	*Farm Labourer*	*„*	*„*
Meta Webber	*Sister in Law*	*Un*	*18*	*Servant (Domestic)*	*„*	*„*
Charlie Chowen	*Serv*	*Un*	*18*	*Farm Labourer*	*„*	*„*

The Will of Nicholas Tapson dated 8 October 1904

This is the last Will and Testament of me Nicholas Tapson of The Golden Inn Highampton in the County of Devon Licensed Victualler I devise my two Cottages and Gardens situate in Burden Road Highampton aforesaid now in the occupation of John Gill and Clement Webber as tenants to Meta Ball the wife of James Ball of Porlock in the County of Somerset Carpenter for her own absolute use and benefit In the event of my having sold the said Cottages in my lifetime then I give her in lieu thereof a legacy of Fifty pounds ..... All the rest residue and remainder of my real and personal estate ..... I give devise and bequeath the same unto my dear wife Julia Mary Webber Tapson whom I appoint sole Executrix of this my Will In Witness whereof I have to this my Will set my hand this eighth day of October One thousand nine hundred and four Nicholas Tapson

Clement Webber was Julia's brother; her sister, Meta, had married since the 1891 census. Nicholas died on 5 May 1913 at Holbrook, Northlew, the parish immediately to the south of Highampton; he would have been very nearly 73 years old, the age given on his death certificate. Probate was granted to his widow on 15 July 1913; his estate was valued at £1,641 - 1 - 9. Julia died on 5 November 1924, aged 69, at Petrockstowe village, which is some four miles north of Highampton. Probate of her will was granted on 11 December 1924, her estate being valued at £2956 - 17 - 2.

The Will of Julia Mary Webber Tapson dated 9 December 1922

This is the last will and testament of me Julia Mary Webber Tapson of Northlew in the County of Devon Widow I give devise and bequeath all my real and personal estate of whatever kind and wheresoever situate unto my nephew Nicholas John Tapson Webber for his own use absolutely And I appoint my said nephew to be the sole Executor of this my will In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand this ninth day of December one thousand nine hundred and twenty two J M W Tapson
Codicil dated 8 October 1924 *..... I give unto my sister Meta Ball ..... all those my two plots of land situate at Burdon in the parish of Highampton ..... and in all other respects I confirm my said will*

[•] See Appendix VI (Addenda)

6.20 CHRISTOPHER TAPSON, ROYAL MARINE, GROCER & INNKEEPER

Christopher, the youngest son of Nicholas and Mary, joined the Plymouth Division of the Royal Marines when he was 20 years old. At the time of his discharge the following entry was made in a Royal Marines Description Book (PRO ADM158/270):

Date of Attestation	Name	Age	Size ft in	Parish	County	Colour of Hair	Eyes	Complexion
10 Aug 1826	Christopher Tapson	19	5 6	Stowford	Devon	Light	Grey	Fair

By whom Enlisted	Where Enlisted	Trade	Observations	When Set Off the Rolls
Lieut Morgan	Tavistock	Labourer	1 Class 10 Aug '40	28 Oct 1839
			Discharged Paid £20	

Four years before his discharge Nicholas had been married at Stoke Damerel:

6 Aug 1835 ***Christopher Tapson*** *of a Parish, Private in the Royal Marines, &* ***Mary Bailey*** *of this Parish, a Spinster, by Banns in the presence of Henry Burnet (?) & Mary Ann Burnet(?)*

The first child of Nicholas and Mary was a daughter, Mary (page 199); then a son was baptized in the church of St. Andrew, Plymouth:•

21 Apr 1839 Robert son of Christopher & Mary Tapson, Bath(?) St. Private R. Marines

Christopher was still in the Plymouth area in September 1840 when he was a witness at the wedding of his nephew and niece (page 185), but he later re-enlisted into the Royal Marines, this time for a period of Limited Service with the Woolwich Division beginning on 16 August 1842. An entry in a Royal Marines Description Book (PRO ADM158/69), made at the time of his discharge, gives details of this service:

Old Establishment	Date of Attestation	Name	Age	Size ft in	Parish	Town	County
Corp^{l} 44 C^{o}	16 Aug 1842	Tapson Christopher	36	5 7	Stowford	Launceston	Devon

Colour of Hair	Eyes	Complexion	By whom Enlisted	Where Enlisted	Trade	Former Service Y	M	D	
Lt	Grey	Fresh	Head Quarters	Woolwich	Labourer	13	2	19	in Plym.

Observations	When set off Rolls	Reason
Limited	30 Nov 1847	D per Adm^{ty} order

The Attestation Form (PRO ADM157/38 Fo. 410) which Christopher had to complete when he re-enlisted gives the above information about himself and his service in the Plymouth Division and also further details about that service: that he served 13yr 2m 19d as a private, 5yr 8m 23d of which were spent on shore and the remainder on the following ships:

Ships	From	To	Y	M	D
Blonde	1 Feb 1828	4 Jun 1831	3	4	3
Melville	30 Sep 1831	8 Jan 1832	0	3	9
Malabar	19 Oct 1832	24 Jul 1834	1	9	5
Phœnix (for Spain)	26 Apr 1836	4 Jun 1838	2	1	9

The following character was noted on his Discharge Certificate (from Plymouth):

Very good. Nothing recorded against him.

Although this certificate states that Christopher had served as a private at Plymouth, the second of the Description Books quoted above indicates that he was a corporal there. Perhaps his promotion to corporal was connected with his regrading as *First Class*, subsequent to his discharge from Plymouth, on the 14th anniversary of his original attestation, as noted in the first of the Description Books quoted.

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

Whilst at Woolwich Christopher was promoted to sergeant, a fact noted in the second of two baptismal entries at St. Mary Magdalene, Woolwich (GLRO):

16 Oct 1842 William — son of Christopher & Mary Tapson, Royal Marine Barracks, Private in Royal Marines [born 28 Sep]

29 Dec 1844 John — son of Christopher & Mary Tapson, Royal Marine Barracks, Serjeant Royal Marines [born 14 Dec]

After his discharge from the Woolwich Division of the Royal Marines on 30 November 1847 (page 198) Christopher established himself as a shopkeeper in Woolwich; his household is shown in the 1851 census return for that parish (PRO HO107/1588 Fo. 175):

1 Dairy Place

Christopher Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*45*	*Grocer, etc*	*Devon,*	*Stowford*
Mary Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*48*		*„*	*Buckland*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*22*		*„*	*Plymouth*
Mary Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*15*		*„*	*„*
Robert Tapson	*Son*		*11*	*Scholar*	*„*	*„*
William Tapson	*Son*		*8*	*„*	*Kent,*	*Woolwich*
John Tapson	*Son*		*6*	*„*	*„*	*„*

It is made clear in Christopher's will that Elizabeth was his step-daughter, who would have been about 7 years old when he married her mother. She married George Leeds in 1851, Q2 (Greenwich R.D.).

Christopher's daughter, Mary, married at St. Mary Magdalene, Woolwich (GLRO):

2 Dec 1856 ***William Raymond*** *Full Bachelor Gunner Royal Navy Woolwich*
(Father: Joseph Raymond, Rope Maker)
Mary Tapson *Full Spinster Woolwich*
(Father: Christopher Tapson, Grocer)
in the presence of Christopher Tapson & Elizabeth Lindsay

If she really was of full age, Mary must have been born before 2 December 1835.

A *Rating Assessment for the Parish of Woolwich* dated *Christmas 1858* shows that Christopher had acquired a property in Frances Street:

		OLD		NEW	
		Gross Estimated Value	Rateable Value	Gross Estimated Rental	Rateable Value
Christopher Tapson	*House*	*£20*	*£15*	*£30*	*£24*

Christopher was living there at the time of the 1861 census (PRO RG9/404 Fo. 140):

6 Frances Street

Christopher Tapson	*Head*	*Widr*	*55*	*Grocer*	*Devon,*	*Stowforth*
John Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*16*	*Engine Fitter*	*Kent,*	*Woolwich*
Ann Doige	*Neice*	*Un*	*38*	*Housekeeper*	*Devon,*	*Stowforth*
Caroline Davis	*Boarder*	*Wid*	*38*	*Eating House Keeper*	*Surrey,*	*Lambeth*
Margaret Doran	*Serv*	*Un*	*23*	*General Servant*	*Ireland*	
Elizabeth Beech	*Serv*	*Un*	*16*	*„ „*	*Lancashire,*	*Liverpool*

Mary, Christopher's wife, had died since the previous census; she may have been the Mary Tapson whose death was registered in 1858, Q3, the place of death being given as St. Olave, possibly in the Bermondsey R.D., to the west of Woolwich. *Ann Doige* must have been a daughter of Christopher's sister Elizabeth who married Roger Doidge in 1806, but one would have expected Ann's age in April 1861 to have been 44 (page 184). By the 1871 census for Woolwich (PRO RG10/777 Fo. 43), having aged only another seven years during the decade, she had taken over the premises:

6 Frances Street

Ann Doidge	*Head*	*Un*	*45*	*General Shop*	*Devon,*	*Marystow*
James Kelly	*Visitor*	*Un*	*11*	*Scholar*	*Kent,*	*Woolwich*
Joseph Kelly	*Visitor*	*Un*	*9*	*„*	*„*	*„*

Christopher was back in Devon by 1871 and his houshold appears in the census return of that year for Lifton (PRO RG10/2149 Fo. 50):

Arundell Arms Inn

Christopher Tapson	*Head*	*Widr*	*65*	*Innkeeper*	*Devon,*	*Stowford*
William Raymond	*Son-in-Law*	*Mar*	*51*	*Gunner R.N. Retired*	*„*	*Plymouth*
Mary Raymond	*Dau*	*Mar*	*35*	*Wife of do*	*„*	*„*
William C. Raymond	*GdSon*		*9*		*„*	*„*
Joseph A. Raymond	*GdSon*		*4*		*„*	*„*
Annie E. Raymond	*GdDau*		*3*		*„*	*Lifton*
Elizabeth Woods	*Visitor*	*Wid*	*59*	*Nurse*	*„*	*Chivelstone*
Emma M. Westlake	*Servant*	*Un*	*14*	*Maid of all Work*	*„*	*Stowford*

The return for Lifton (PRO RG11/2221 Fo. 54) reveals that by the time of the 1881 census Christopher had retired and Mary's husband had died:

Fore St

Christopher Tapson	*Head*	*Widr*	*75*	*Retired Grocer*	*Devon,*	*Stowford*
Robert Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*41*	*Pensioner*	*„*	*Plymouth*
Mary Raymond	*Dau*	*Wid*	*45*	*Shopkeeper*	*„*	*„*
Annie Raymond	*GdDau*		*13*	*Scholar*	*„*	*Lifton*
Ada Raymond	*GdDau*		*7*	*„*	*„*	*„*

The Will of Christopher Tapson dated 4 May 1880

This is the last Will and Testament of me Christopher Tapson of Lifton Village ..... Gentleman. ..... I give and bequeath all my plate and plated goods and any articles of furniture or of any other description ..... to my daughter Mary Raymond Widow of William Raymond late a Gunner in the Royal Navy ..... I give and bequeath my leasehold houses Nº 18, 19, 20, 21 Hamilton Terrace Upper Bloomfield in the parish of Plumstead in the County of Kent ..... for all the remainder of the term or respective terms therein unto my said daughter Mary Raymond ..... subject nevertheless to the payment thereout during the said term or terms of the sum of Three shillings per week to my son Robert Tapson late a Gunner in the Royal Artillery for his life. I give and bequeath my leasehold houses Number 6 Francis Street in the parish of Woolwich in the County of Kent Numbers 7 and 8 ..... Gibson Street in the parish of Greenwich in the County of Kent, Number 36 Percy Terrace, Burragetown ..... in the parish of Plumstead in the County of Kent ..... for all the remainder of the term or respective terms therein to my son William Tapson a Steward in Her Majesty's Navy ..... subject nevertheless to the payment thereout during the said term or terms of the sum of Four shillings per week to my son Robert Tapson ..... for his life. I give and bequeath my leasehold house Christopher Cottage Albert Street ..... in the parish of Plumstead in the County of Kent ..... to my step-daughter Elizabeth Leeds (Wife of George Leeds a Major in the Royal Artillery) for her life ..... and after her death I give and bequeath the said house unto my daughter Mary Raymond and my son William Tapson ..... in equal shares. I give and bequeath unto my son Robert Tapson to be paid immediately on my decease the sum of Five pounds to buy mourning ..... All the rest residue and remainder of my real and personal estate I give devise and bequeath unto my three children Mary Raymond, William Tapson and Robert Tapson ..... in equal shares ..... but I hereby further direct that Robert Tapson's share shall be held in trust by Mary Raymond and William Tapson and that he be allowed the sum of Two shillings and six pence per week in addition to the three shillings per week to be allowed him by Mary Raymond and the Four shillings by William Tapson until his share be exhausted. I hereby appoint my said daughter Mary Raymond and my son William Tapson joint Executors of this my last Will ..... In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand this fourth day of May One thousand eight hundred and eighty *Christopher Tapson*

Christopher died on 9 April 1886 at Lifton, aged 80. His will was proved at Exeter on 2 June 1886; the gross value of his estate was £1241. [The term *Gentleman* used in wills of this period implied that the testator had retired from his trade or profession.]

6.21 ROBERT TAPSON, ROYAL ARTILLERY, GUNNER

Christopher's eldest son, Robert, was just 19 when he enlisted into the Royal Artillery. A Royal Chelsea Hospital Document (PRO WO97/1838) gives details of his military career:

Leith Fort 26 May 1874
Discharge of 972 Gunner Robert Tapson
16 years 44 days service (11 3/12 year abroad in India)
Discharge — unfit for further service
Conduct has been Very Good and he is in possession of three Good Conduct Badges
His name appears three times in the Regimental Defaulters Book
He has never been tried by Court-Martial

Royal Artillery			From	To	yr	days
...?... Bts	Attested	Driver	13 Apr 58	31 Aug 58		141
14 Batt^{n}	Transferred	„	1 Sep 58	30 Apr 59		242
11th B^{de}	„	„	1 May 59	31 Dec 59		245
14 B^{de}	„	„	1 Jan 60	7 Jun 64	4	159
	Posted	Trumpeter	8 Jun 64	31 Oct 69	5	146
Re-engaged at Nusselrabad for 11 20/365 yrs 24 Mar 68						
		Gunner	1 Nov 69	26 May 74	4	207
			TOTAL		16	44
Further service from 27 May 74 - 15 Jun 74 when finally discharged						20
					16	64

A Medical Report is attached to the service record:

a) Dyspepsia b) Eczema
It is possible that the Dyspepsia has been aggravated by drinking and that the Eczema is of a Syphilitic origin. The disease is likely to be permanent
Will not be able to contribute in any way towards livelyhood
No 972 Gun^{r} Robert Tapson, by Trade a Shop-man
was born in the parish of Plymouth, Devon, and attested for the Royl Arty Reg at Woolwich, Kent, on 13 April 1858 At the age of 19 years
Discharged at Leith Fort 15 June 1874
Age 35 Height 5 feet 7 inches
Complexion Fair Eyes Blue Hair Fair Trade Shopman
Intended Place of Residence Arundell Hotel, Lifton, Devon

Robert, who did not marry, is shown in the 1881 census for Lifton (page 200) living at Fore Street, Lifton, with his retired father, his widowed sister and her two daughters. It is clear from Robert's medical report at the time of his discharge from the Royal Artillery on 15 June 1874 that his father had not then retired from the Arundell Arms. The fact that Robert's sister Mary and brother William were given responsibility in their father's will for making a weekly allowance to Robert might seem to suggest that Christopher considered Robert to be incapable of handling money wisely, especially if the implication in his medical report that he was a heavy drinker was well founded. However, an alternative explanation is that Robert's health had further deteriorated and it was thought that he was unlikely to live long; for he died, at Lifton, within a year of the will being written. His death certificate* states that he died on 29 April 1881 of *heart disease* aged 42 years, that he was a Royal Artillery Pensioner, and that his father, Christopher Tapson, was present at his death; his age was accurately recorded on his death certificate. It is probable that the period of 11¼ years which Robert spent in India took its toll upon his health and was as much responsible for his medical condition as was his way of life, which itself was no doubt a consequence of the difficulties of living in that subcontinent. Robert was buried at Lifton.

*Reported by Mrs. Pauline Johnson, Superintendent Registrar at Tavistock.

6.22 WILLIAM TAPSON, ROYAL NAVY, SHIP'S STEWARD

Christopher's second son, William, entered the Royal Navy and was 16 years old when he joined his first ship. The early part of his naval career is detailed in a book of Warrant Officers' and Seamen's Services (PRO ADM29/70 Page 366):

William Tapson

No	Character	Ship	Age	Entry	Rank/Rating	Discharge	Cause	Time Years	Time Days
121		Mars	22	Jul 59	Ship's Steward Asst.	25 Aug 62			
„	V Good	„	20	26 Aug 62	„	7 Feb 63	Shore		166
243	V Good	Bombay		2 Apr 64	„	10 May 64	}		
77		Egmont		11 May 64	„	8 Feb 65	}		313
„		„		9 Feb 65	Acting S. Steward	8 Feb 66	}	3	189
„	V Good	„		9 Feb 66	S. Steward 3C	31 Aug 67	Off }		
2	V Good	Egmont		1 Sep 67	„	15 Aug 68	}		
263		Industry		16 Aug 68	„	31 Dec 68			
								4	303

The total length of service entered, 4 years and 303 days, does not include the period spent on H.M.S. Industry or the gap between 7 February 1863 and 2 April 1864. This latter period is partly covered in another book (PRO ADM29/68 Page 62), which merely states:

Record of Service 13 Oct 1863 - 25 Aug 1864 Will^m Tapson (S.S. 1580)

The 1861 census (PRO RG9/4439 Fo. 219) shows William serving aboard H.M.S. Mars *(80 guns) at anchor in Palermo Bay*:

William Tapson Ships' Stewards Single 19 Woolwich, Kent

And he was 26 when his marriage was registered in 1868, Q4 (Rotherhithe R.D.); a year later, in 1869, Q4, the birth of William Christopher J. Tapson was registered (Woolwich R.D.) and the child appears in the 1871 census return for Woolwich (PRO RG10/777 Fo. 44):

12 Frances St (Navy & Army)

Margaret Shorter	*Head*	*Wid*	*57*	*Licensed Victualler*	*Ireland*
.....					
.....					
Jane Tapson	*Boarder*	*Mar*	*29*	*Needle Woman*	*Kent, Deptford*
William C. J. Tapson	*„*	*Un*	*2*		*Kent, Plumstead*

The Navy & Army, the hostelry where Jane and her baby son were lodging, was in the same street as Christopher's former home, and Christopher also owned leasehold houses in Plumstead (page 200), the parish in which William C. J. Tapson was born.

Soon after the 1871 census William was posted to the north of England; the birth of a daughter, Daisy Mary J. Tapson, was registered in 1873, Q2 (Birkenhead R.D.). The 1881 census informs us that she was born at Rock Ferry, which is on the Birkenhead side of the Mersey. Another move took William and Jane back to the south of England, where the birth of Violet Emma Tapson was registered in 1879, Q4 (Alverstoke R.D.). At the time of the 1881 census the family were based at Portsea, near Portsmouth in Hampshire (PRO RG11/1147 Fo. 57):

Chapel Row No 5

Jane Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*36*	*Wife of Ship's Steward*	*Kent, Deptford*
William C. Tapson	*Son*		*11*	*Scholar*	*„ Plumstead*
Daisy M. F. Tapson	*Dau*		*8*	*„*	*Cheshire,Rock Ferry*
Violet E. Tapson	*Dau*		*1*		*Hants, Brockhurst*

Brockhurst, the birthplace given for Violet Emma in 1881 and 1891, would seem to be Brockenhurst.

The 1881 census includes William among the crew of H.M.S. Minotaur, a *First Rate Ironclad* ship with a complement of 890, *anchored off Gibraltar* (PRO RG11/5636 Fo. 93):

William Tapson	*Ship's Steward 1st Class*	*Married*	*38*	*Woolwich, Kent*

These later years of William's service are detailed in a Register of Seamen's Services (PRO ADM188/40), in which his date of birth is wrongly recorded (page 199):

Name	*Date of Birth*	*Place of Birth*	*Date and Period of C.S. Engagement*
William Tapson	*26 Aug 1842*	*Woolwich, Kent*	*1 Apr 1871* *10 yrs*

Height	*Hair*	*Eyes*	*Complexion*	*Official No.*
5 6½	*Brown*	*Grey*	*Fresh*	*61240*

Ship Served in	*Rating*			*Character*	*If Discharged*
Caledonia	*S. Stwd 2C*	*1 Jan 73*	*— 30 Jun 73*	*V Good*	*Paid off*
Caledonia	*„*	*1 Jul 73*	*— 30 Sep 73*	*„*	*D of Wellington*
D of Wellington	*„*	*1 Oct 73*	*— 31 Oct 73*	*„*	
Achilles	*„*	*1 Nov 73*	*— 28 May 74*	*„*	
Adventure	*„*	*29 May 74*			
„	*S.S. 1C*	*26 Apr 75*	*— 11 Aug 75*	*Exmp*	
Pembroke	*„*	*12 Aug 75*	*— 18 Aug 75*	*Time only*	
D of Wellington	*„*	*19 Aug 75*	*— 31 Dec 77*	*Exemp*	*Paid off*
„	*„*	*1 Jan 78*	*— 10 Aug 79*	*„*	
Minotaur	*„*	*11 Aug 79*	*— 23 Dec 81*	*„*	
D of Wellington	*„*	*24 Dec 81*	*— 19 Apr 82*	*Time only*	
Sultan	*„*	*20 Apr 82*	*— 26 Nov 85*	*V G*	
D of Wellington	*„*	*27 Nov 85*	*— 12 Feb 86*	*Exy*	
Asia	*„*	*13 Feb 86*	*— 24 Mar 86*	*V G*	
D of Wellington	*„*	*25 Mar 86*	*— 20 Apr 86*	*V G*	*Shore Pensioned*

The abbreviation *C.S.* used in this register stands for *Continuous Service*. William would have been 43 years old when he was shore pensioned.

After William's retirement from the Royal Navy in 1886 the family settled at Portsea, as is shown by the 1891 census for that town (PRO RG12/861 Fo. 143):

6 Chapel Row

William Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*48*	*Book Keeper*	*Kent, Woolwich*
Jane Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*48*		*„ Deptford*
Daisy Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*18*	*Shop Assistant*	*Cheshire, Rockferry*
Violet Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*11*		*Hants, Brockhurst*

The marriages were registered of William Christopher J. in 1895, Q3 (Portsea R.D.), of Daisy Mary J. in 1898, Q2 (Portsea R.D.), and of Violet Emma in 1909, Q3 (Portsmouth R.D.). William's death was registered in 1904, Q3 (Portsmouth R.D.); his age was correctly given as 61. Jane died in 1922, Q4 (Portsmouth R.D.); the age recorded, 77, is consistent with that given in the 1881 census, but not with that given in 1871 or in 1891.•

In 1865 the birth was registered of a Samuel Tapson. According to Samuel's birth certificate he was born at *First Street, Millbrook, Maker* (on the Cornish side of the Tamar estuary) on 8 March 1865, the son of *Christopher Tapson*, a *Ships Steward*, and *Jane Tapson, formerly Denslowe*. The birth was registered on 15 April 1865 by *Christopher Tapson*, who made his mark. No marriage had been registered for Christopher, nor was any subsequent burial; and the only Tapson name which appears in the records of the Royal Navy as a ship's steward is William's. It seems therefore a distinct possibility that Samuel (who became known as *Christopher Samuel*) was the illegitimate son of William who, to cover his tracks, used his father's name and claimed to be married. [The Jane whom William later married was not named Denslowe.] Because positive proof is lacking, Samuel is placed among the *Strays* in chapter 10 (page 368).

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

6.23 JOHN TAPSON, ROYAL NAVY, STOKER

John, Christopher's youngest son, was living at home and working as an engine fitter at the time of the 1861 census (page 199), but he subsequently followed his brother William into the Royal Navy. His service career is detailed in a Register of Seamen's Services (PRO ADM188/63):

Name	*Date of Birth*	*Place of Birth*	*Date and Period of C.S. Engagement*
John Tapson	*14 Dec 1843*	*Woolwich*	*4 June 1875 10 years*

Height	*Hair*	*Eyes*	*Complexion*
5 5½	*Brown*	*Grey*	*Sallow*

Ship Served in	*Rating*									*Character*
Boxer	*Cooks Mte*	*1*	*Jan*	*73*	—	*11*	*Jan*	*73*		*V Good*
Tenedos	*„*	*12*	*Jan*	*73*	—	*14*	*Apr*	*73*		*„*
Scout	*„*	*15*	*Apr*	*73*	—	*2*	*Jun*	*75*		*„*
Pembroke	*Stoker 2Cl*	*4*	*Jun*	*75*	—	*9*	*Jul*	*75*		*„*
Penelope	*„*	*10*	*Jul*	*75*	—	*6*	*Sep*	*75*		*„*
Pembroke	*„*	*7*	*Sep*	*75*	—	*16*	*Sep*	*75*		*„*
Asia	*„*	*17*	*Sep*	*75*	—	*25*	*Sep*	*75*		*„*
Malabar	*„*	*26*	*Sep*	*75*	—	*7*	*Jan*	*76*		*„*
„	*„*	*15*	*Jan*	*76*						
„	*Stoker*	*1*	*Mar*	*76*	—	*21*	*Apr*	*76*		*Good*
Asia	*„*	*22*	*Apr*	*76*	—	*10*	*May*	*76*		*V Good*
Warrior	*„*	*11*	*May*	*76*	—	*21*	*Jul*	*77*		*„*
„	*„*	*29*	*Jul*	*77*	—	*19*	*Oct*	*77*		*Good*
Asia	*„*	*20*	*Oct*	*77*	—	*12*	*Dec*	*77*		*V Good*
Devastation	*„*	*13*	*Dec*	*77*	—	*20*	*Nov*	*78*		*V Good*
Indus	*„*	*21*	*Nov*	*78*	—	*24*	*Apr*	*79*		*Good*
Tyre	*„*	*25*	*Apr*	*79*	—	*23*	*Jun*	*79*		*Good*
Lily	*„*	*24*	*Jun*	*79*						

John's date of birth given in this register is probably incorrect: when he was baptized on 29 December 1844 his date of birth was recorded as 14 December 1844 (page 199). The age of 16 given for him in the 1861 census (page 199) seems to confirm that he was born on 14 December 1844. No evidence has come to light of his ever having married. John's death in 1879 whilst serving aboard the Lily is noted in the Index to Marine Deaths (FRC). The memorial tablet at Lifton which records the deaths of Christopher, his daughter Mary Raymond (on 5 October 1893), and his sons Robert and John, states that John died at Shanghai on 17 September 1879, aged 34 years. This memorial stone is half-way between the church tower and the western boundary wall of the graveyard.

Whereas the new A30 trunk road bypasses Lifton, the old A30 went straight through the village; consequently Lifton has grown almost into a small town, whilst Stowford village, which lies about half a mile north of the old A30, has remained little more than a hamlet (page 205). The Arundell Arms at Lifton, of which Christopher became the licensee after his return to Devon from Woolwich, was an old staging inn deriving good business from the passing horse-drawn traffic. The hamlet of Spry Town, where Christopher had been born and spent his childhood, although in the parish of Stowford, is only a mile from Lifton; so it would obviously have been to that larger and more exciting village that Christopher and his elder brothers (and perhaps his sisters too), like their father and uncles before them, would have gone to obtain their entertainment — and even to sow their wild oats (page 206): the only reason for their visiting Stowford village, which is nearly two miles from Spry Town, would have been to go to church there. Thus in retiring to Lifton Christopher was really coming home. The proximity of Spry Town to Lifton also probably accounts for the fact that Christopher's nephews Robert and Nicholas both gave their place of birth, incorrectly, as Lifton in the census returns (pages 194, 196); for they too were born at Spry Town and lived there as young boys until their father, Ebsworthy, moved to Bideford (page 191).

The will, proved on 25 August 1816 in the Consistory Court of the Bishop of Exeter, was destroyed in World War II, but a copy, quoted above, was made for the Stamp Duty Office. The oath was sworn by Catherine Tapson, who made her mark. Probate refers to *Ebsworthy Tapson* and states that he died on 14 June 1816. Effects were valued at *under £100*. In his will Ebsworthy mentions all his children baptized at South Petherwin except Robert, who was buried in 1813, as well as Ebsworthy and James, who were not baptized in that parish.

Four months before Ebsworthy made his will his daughter Elizabeth was married, and Esther was married two days after his will was drawn up; both weddings were at South Petherwin:

8 Nov 1814 ***James Mason*** *of the Parish of St Mary Magdalene &*
Elizabeth Tapson *of the Parish of South Petherwin*
by Banns in the presence of Jas. Smith & John Jeffery

5 Mar 1815 ***John Jeffery*** *of the Parish of South Petherwin &*
Esther Tapson *of the Parish of South Petherwin*
by Banns in the presence of Jas. Smith & George Denham Congdon

St. Mary Magdalene is the parish church of Launceston.

Two more burials were then recorded at South Petherwin:

7 Nov 1817	*Wm Tapson*	*Launceston*	*22*
24 Feb 1818	*Catherine Tapson*	*Honiton*	*55*

The first of these burials was that of Catherine's son William, who would have been 22 years old; this is confirmed by his not being mentioned in Catherine's will (CRO), which she made the week after her son's funeral and three months before her own death:

The Will of Catherine Tapson dated 12 November 1817

By Premission of Almighty God I Catherine Tapson of Southpetherwin and County of Cornwall widdow being of perfect sound mind memory and understanding do hereby make and declare this writing to be and contain my last will and Testament in manner following—(That is to say) Principally and first of all I give and dispose of the same as follows, I give and Bequeath to my Daughter Elizabeth Mason five pounds and two silver meat spoons, I give and Bequeath to my Daughter Ann five pounds and the Chest of Drars and the mahoggany table the half a Dozen teaspoons and the half Dozen Chinied cups and saussers, I give unto my son Ebsworthy five pounds and papspoon, I give to my Daughter Easter Jeffery five pounds and the tick bead and beading The Clock and two morning gowns and the second morning gown and the black pedicoat the straw Bonnet and the sugger toungs, A I do hereby make my son James my hole and sole Executor of this my last will and Testamen, he paying all just debts funeral expences and the formentioned Lagacys Thay all to be paid within Twelve months after my Decease In Witness whereof I have here unto Set my hand and seal this Twelve day of November one Thousand Eight Houndred and Seventeen The mark of Cathne Tapson

Catherine left five pounds and personal or household items to each of her surviving children except James, the youngest. It is strange that she should also have made him her executor, for evidence will be produced later (page 214) that he was born around 1800 and so would have been only about 17, whereas Ebsworthy, as again later evidence will demonstrate (page 209), would have been some ten years older. However, perhaps Catherine intended that James should be the residuary legatee. The will was proved at South Petherwin on 5 January 1819 (for the Archidiaconal Court of Cornwall) *Admon given to James Tapson of Launceston Butcher the son of the deceased*.

An entry in the Launceston parish register must refer to the marriage of Ann, the second daughter of Ebsworthy and Catherine: one of the witnesses was James Tapson, who in his will left £20 to his *niece Catherine Smith* (page 214):

28 Dec 1819 ***Joseph Smith*** *of this Parish, Bachelor, &*
Ann Tapson *of this Parish, Spinster,*
by Banns in the presence of James Tapson & Caroline .....

6.25 EBSWORTHY TAPSON OF LAUNCESTON, CARPENTER & GROCER

The register of St. Thomas by Launceston, the parish which lies immediately to the west of Launceston and to the north of South Petherwin, records the marriage:

28 May 1818 ***Ebsworthy Tapson*** *of this Parish &* ***Mary Congdon*** *of this Parish by Banns in the presence of Mary Orchard, Ann Tapson & Wm Geake*

The wedding was followed by baptisms in Launceston Wesleyan Chapel:

11 Apr 1819	*Betsey Ann*	*dau of Ebsworthy & Mary Tapson, Launceston, Carpenter*	*(born 26 Mar 1819)*
15 Jul 1823	*Ann*	*dau of Ebsworthy & Mary Tapson, Launceston, Carpenter*	*(born 26 May 1823)*
17 Jul 1825	*Ann*	*dau of Ebsworthy & Mary Tapson, Launceston, Carpenter*	*(born 30 Jun 1825)*
22 Apr 1828	*James William*	*son of Ebsworthy & Mary Tapson, Launceston, Carpenter*	*(born 6 Apr 1828)*
2 Feb 1832	*John*	*son of Ebsworthy & Mary Tapson, Launceston, Carpenter*	*(born 11 Jan 1832)*

and the burials:

12 Jun 1824	*Ann Tapson*	*dau of Ebsworthy & Mary Tapson, Launceston, aged 1*
5 Nov 1834	*Ebsworthy Tapson*	*child, aged 13 months*

The first of these burials was obviously that of Ann born 26 May 1823; whether the second burial was that of another child of Ebsworthy and Mary, or of James and Grace (page 214), is not certain.

The family appears in the 1841 census for Launceston (PRO HO107/154/1 Fo. 56):

Back Lane or Tower Street

Ebsworthy Tapson	*45-49*	*Builder*	*Born in Cornwall*
Mary Tapson	*45-49*		*Born in Cornwall*
Betsy Ann Tapson	*20-24*	*Milliner*	*Born in Cornwall*
Ann Tapson	*15-19*		*Born in Cornwall*
James Tapson	*13*		*Born in Cornwall*
John Tapson	*9*		*Born in Cornwall*
Ebsworthy Tapson	*1*		*Born in Cornwall*

There seems to be no baptismal entry for the youngest child in the Launceston parish or Wesleyan registers, as was also the case for the Ebsworthy buried on 5 November 1834. However, the Wesleyan register does record the baptism of another child of Ebsworthy and Mary:

1 Oct 1844 Catherine Hester dau of Ebsworthy & Mary Tapson, Launceston, Grocer

In the 1841 census Ebsworthy had described himself as a builder rather than as a carpenter; in this latest baptismal entry he is referred to as a grocer.

Betsey Ann was married at Stoke Damerel:

12 Oct 1846	***Edward Hicks***	*Full*	*Bachelor*	*Excise Officer*	*John Street*
			(Father: Charles Hicks, Seedsman)		
	Bessy Ann Tapson	*Full*	*Spinster*		*76 George Street*
			(Father: Ebsworthy Tapson, Grocer)		

after Banns in the presence of W. J. Hawkins & John Symond

And from a marriage entry in the Launceston parish register it is apparent that Ebsworthy and Mary had another daughter, Mary, whose baptism is not recorded in the Launceston parish or Wesleyan registers:

3 Apr 1849	***Richard Walters***	*Full*	*Bachelor*	*Surveyor*	*Tavistock*
			(Father: Thomas Walters, Plasterer)		
	Mary Tapson	*Full*	*Spinster*		*Launceston*
			(Father: Ebsworthy Tapson, Builder)		

in the presence of Ebsworthy Tapson & Wm Walters•

•See Appendix VI (Addenda).

Mary and Richard Walters are listed, with their baby son, in the 1851 census return for Tavistock (PRO HO107/1883 Fo. 407), from which it appears that Mary was born about 1820:

Higher Market Street

Richard Walters	*Head*	*Mar*	*30*	*Assistant Surveyor*	*Devon, Tavistock*
Mary Walters	*Wife*	*Mar*	*30*	*Wife*	*Cornwall, Launceston*
Richard Walters	*Son*	*Un*	*1*	*Son*	*Devon, Tavistock*
Emma Holmes	*Serv*	*Un*	*19*	*House Servt*	*„ Petertavy*

Only two of the children of Ebsworthy and Mary were at home at the time of the 1851 census for Launceston (PRO HO107/1899 Fo. 380):

Tower Street

Ebsworthy Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*60*	*Grocer*	*Cornwall, South Petherwin*
Mary Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*54*		*„ St. Thomas*
John Tapson	*Son*		*19*	*Grocer's Apprentice*	*„ Launceston*
Ebsworthy Tapson	*Son*		*11*	*Scholar*	*„ „*
Jane Cole	*Servant*	*Un*	*18*	*House Servant*	*Devon, Holsworthy*

Ebsworthy's place of birth confirms that he was a son of Ebsworthy and Catherine; if their ages are given correctly, Ebsworthy would have been born about 1790 and Mary about 1796

In 1851 Ann, 25 at the time, was on the staff of Launceston Workhouse. A special census form was used to list staff and inmates of the Union Workhouses (PRO HO107/1899 Fo. 369):

Union House, Launceston, Cornwall

A. Tapson	*Officer of Union*	*Un*	*Female*	*25*	*School Mistress of Union*	*Cornwall, Lanson*

Ebsworthy ran his grocery business in conjunction with his trade as a carpenter and builder. Probably Mary and the children helped in the grocery shop: in the 1851 census John is described as a *Grocer's Apprentice*. In the Launceston section of Pigot's 1830 directory Ebsworthy is listed under *Carpenters* as:

Tapson Ebsworthy, Back Lane

This is also his address in 1844 both under *Shopkeepers & Dealers in Groceries & Sundries* and under *Carpenters*. In Williams' directory for 1847 he is listed only as:

Tapson, Ebsworthy, shopkeeper, Back Lane

but in Slater's 1852 directory the entry:

Tapson Ebsworthy, Back Lane

appears both under *Carpenters* and under *Shopkeepers and Dealers in Groceries and Sundries*. Then in Kelly's 1856 directory he appears under *Traders* as:

Tapson Elsworthy, shopkeeper, Tower street

Tower Street was, as is made clear in the 1841 census, the alternative name for Back Lane.

At the time of the 1861 census for Launceston (PRO RG9/1520 Fo. 43) only Kate (presumably Catherine Hester who would have been about 16½ at the time, but was missing from the 1851 census return) was still living at home:

Tower Street

Ebsworthy Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*70*	*Carpenter*	*Cornwall, St. Thomas*
Mary Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*64*	*Wife*	*„ „*
Kate Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*17*		*„ Launceston*
Mary A. Smith	*Servant*	*Un*	*17*	*Servant*	*„ Tresmeer*

Catherine Hester would have been 21 years old when the following entry was made in the register of the St. Thomas by Launceston Wesleyan Cemetery:

26 Dec 1865 Cath Ellen Tapson Lanson 21

This entry would seem to refer to Catherine Hester.

The Will of Ebsworthy Tapson dated 14 December 1864

This is the last Will and Testament of me Ebsworthy Tapson of the Borough of Launceston in the County of Cornwall Carpenter and Shopkeeper I bequeath unto my Wife Mary all money which may be in my house and ..... standing to my credit in any Bank and all the household furniture and stock in trade in my business of a Shopkeeper ..... all debts which may be due and owing to me ..... except the debts if any which either of my Children may owe me I give and bequeath to my said Wife the annual income which may arise from a sum of Two hundred pounds which by a certain Policy of Assurance will become due and payable at my death from the Royal Exchange Assurance Corporation Society ..... I give to my said Executors power to invest the said money arising from the said Policy ..... and empower them to pay over the annual income arising therefrom as aforesaid I give devise and bequeath unto my Executors hereinafter named all those Messuages Tenements and Dwelling houses ..... situate in Back Lane within the Borough aforesaid Upon Trust to pay over the annual rents arising therefrom unto my said Wife during her life but I declare that such annual rents as well as the annual income arising from the aforesaid sum of Two hundred pounds shall not be paid to my Wife in the event of her marrying again after my decease and on the decease or second marriage of my said Wife I direct that the said sum of Two hundred pounds and the whole of my said houses shall become the property of ..... such of my Children as shall be then living their heirs and assigns share and share alike as tenants in common and not as joint Tenants Subject nevertheless ..... that the share of each of such Children shall have deducted therefrom such sum as they shall respectively owe me at the time of my decease which sums so owing to me at the present time are as follows from my son James Fifty Pounds and from my son John Fifty pounds I direct that the shares which may become due to either of my Daughters shall be for her sole use independently of her husband ..... I appoint my said Wife and John Powell of Launceston aforesaid Grocer Joint Executors of this my Will hereby revoking all former Wills In Witness whereof I the said Ebsworthy Tapson have hereto set my hand this fourteenth day of December One thousand eight hundred and sixty four Ebsworthy Tapson

In a codicil dated 8 November 1867 Ebsworthy revoked *for good and special reasons* the provision that the sum of fifty pounds be deducted from the share of each of his two sons James and John. The witnesses to the codicil were *William Tapson Grocer* and *Dorcas Tapson*, the son and daughter-in-law of his brother James (page 216). Ebsworthy died on 21 November 1867 at Launceston; he was interred at St. Thomas by Launceston Wesleyan Cemetery:

26 Nov 1867 Ebsworthy Tapson Launceston 77

Ebsworthy's age given here, as in the census returns, suggests that he was born about 1790. His will and its codicil were proved at Bodmin on 30 December 1867; effects were valued at *under £450.*

Mary's death certificate* states that she died of *cancer* at 9 Chapel Street, Tavistock, on 26 December 1871, aged 76; she is described as the *widow of Ebsworthy Tapson (master builder)*. The address at which she died was the home of her daughter Mary Walters, although Mary was not there at the time of the 1871 census for Tavistock (PRO RG10/2147 Fo. 950). Mary may have been away looking after her mother, but she was at home for the 1881 census (PRO RG11/2218 Fo. 31) in which her place of birth was wrongly recorded:

9 Chapel Street

Richard Walters	*Head*	*Mar*	*60*	*Land Surveyor*	*Devon, Tavistock*
Mary Walters	*Wife*	*Mar*	*60*		*„ „*
Richard Walters	*Son*	*Mar*	*31*	*Clerk*	*„ „*
Bessie Walters	*Dau*	*Un*	*26*	*Draper's Assistant*	*„ „*
Launcelot Walters	*Son*	*Un*	*24*	*Grocer's Assistant*	*„ „*
Helen K. Walters	*Dau*	*Un*	*22*		*„ „*
Henry H. Gaud	*Visitor*	*Un*	*30*	*School Master*	*„ Horrabridge*

The body of Ebsworthy's widow was taken back to St. Thomas by Launceston, where she had been born, for burial at St. Thomas by Launceston Wesleyan Cemetery:

1 Jan 1872 Mary Tapson Tavistock 76

*Reported by Mrs. Pauline Johnson, Superintendent Registrar at Tavistock.

6.26 JAMES WILLIAM TAPSON OF BRISTOL, HOTEL KEEPER

James William Tapson, the eldest son of Ebsworthy and Mary, was already living in Bristol by 1851, when he was included in the census return for Clifton, the residential district on high ground to the north-west of the city famous for its Regency architecture (PRO HO107/1952 Fo. 116):

Somerset Cottage, World's End

James Blake	*Head*	*Mar*	*44*	*Clerk in Post Office*	*Gloucestersh, Clifton*
.....					
.....					
Jas Will^{m} Tapson	*Visitor*	*Un*	*26*	*Merchant Clerk*	*Cornwall, Launceston*

James William would have been 23 on his next birthday, which he would have celebrated just one week after the date of the census.

James was 24 years old at the time of his marriage, which was registered in 1852, Q4 (Clifton R.D.). The births of the children of James William and his wife, Emma Elizabeth, were registered in the Bristol R.D.: James William Frederick in 1854, Q1; Harry in 1856, Q1; and Emma Kate in 1857, Q4. Harry died on 18 April 1856, at the age of two months; he was buried at The Bristol General Cemetery Co., Bath Road (Arno's Vale).

James William Frederick, then just 7 years old, was not included in the household in the 1861 census for Bristol (PRO RG9/1715 Fo. 55) which lists:

5 Bridge St. Bank Hotel

James W. Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*35*	*Hotel Keeper*	*Cornwall, Launceston*
Emma E. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*40*		*Dorset, Weymouth*
Emma K. Tapson	*Dau*		*3*		*Bristol*

together with 7 *servants*, 8 *boarders* and a *visitor*. James William would have had his 33rd birthday the day before the census. Bridge Street, in the heart of the city, leads to Bristol Bridge, which crosses the river Avon. Further information about the business activities of James William is obtained from Kelly's 1863 Post Office Directory for Bristol, in which the *Commercial* section has the entry:

Tapson James William, bank commercial & family hotel, Bridge Street

A similar entry appears in Kelly's 1866 directory; however, the 1871 census for Bristol (PRO RG10/2522 Fo. 47) shows that James William was then no longer the proprietor of the Bank Hotel. (The Bank Hotel had formerly been the Bristol home of the Bank of England.)•

James William died at 48 Queen Square, Bristol, on 14 January 1872 (although he was not at that address at the time of the 1871 census); he was 43 years old, and had not made a will. Administration was granted to *Emma Elizabeth Tapson of N^{o} 22 Cumberland Street in the City of Bristol the lawful Widow and Relict* on 21 November 1872; James William's estate was valued at *under £200, no leaseholds*. Within three years of this grant of administration, on 7 June 1875, Letters of Administration were again granted to Emma Elizabeth, this time to administer the estate, valued at *under £20*, of her son *James William Frederick Tapson late of Cumberland Street in the City of Bristol Mariner in Merchant Service deceased, who died on the Twenty third day of June 1874 at Guayaguil, Ecuador in South America a Bachelor without Father and intestate*. Emma Elizabeth is described as *of N^{o} 22 Victoria Street Saint Pauls in the City of Bristol Widow the natural and lawful Mother and only next of kin*. James William Frederick would have been 20 years old at the time of his death.

Emma Elizabeth's death was registered in 1877, Q1 (Bristol R.D.), her age being given as 54 years. The marriage of an Emma Kate to Andreas Birkeland was registered in 1878, Q1 (Falmouth R.D.); a marriage certificate would be needed to confirm whether this was the marriage of the only surviving child, then 20 years old, of James William and Emma Elizabeth. The Tavistock parish register records the baptism:

4 Oct 1879	*Winifred Tapson*	*dau of Andrew & Emma Kate Birkeland*	*Chapel*

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

6.27 JOHN TAPSON OF PLYMOUTH, ACCOUNTANT

John, the second son of Ebsworthy and Mary, was 26 years old at the time of his marriage in the church of St. Mary, Plympton:

23 Aug 1858 ***John Tapson*** *Full Bachelor Accountant*
Parish of Charles, Plymouth (Father: Ebsworthy Tapson, Grocer)
Elizabeth Ann MacFarlane *Full Widow*
Plympton St. Mary (Father: Richard Hill, Gentleman)
by Licence in the presence of Ebsworthy Tapson & Edmund Crese(?)

The births of two daughters were registered in Plymouth R.D.: Catherine Hill in 1859, Q2, and Annie Hill in 1860, Q3. The births of two more children were registered in the very large registrar's district of St. Thomas, which covers the area around Exeter: John Richard Hill in 1862, Q2, and Rosa Hill in 1865, Q3. The family were back in the Plymouth area by the time of the 1871 census, when they were included in the return for Stoke Damerel (PRO RG10/2137 Fo. 5):

4 Earls Acre, Milehouse Rd

John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*39*	*Accountant*	*Cornwall, Launceston*
Elizabeth A. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*48*		*London*
Catherine H. Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*11*		*Plymouth*
Annie H. Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*10*		*„*
John H. Tapson	*Son*		*8*		*Exeter*
Rosa H. Tapson	*Dau*		*6*		*„*
Jefoie(?) H. Macfarlane	*Visitor*	*Un*	*26*	*Income from Houses*	*Plymouth*
Caroline Phillips	*Serv*	*Mar*	*50*	*General Servant*	*London*

The family's address is given more fully in THORNE'S THREE TOWNS' DIRECTORY 1873, the three towns being Plymouth, East Stonehouse and Devonport (page 217); John's name appears under *Stoke and Morice Town*:

Tapson John, accountant, Hill Field House, Alma Place, Earl's Acre, Stoke

John is also listed at the same address in the *Court* section of Kelly's 1873 directory for Devonshire.

Rosa Hill died in 1878 and was buried in Ford Park Cemetery:

16 Mar 1878 Rosa Hill Tapson 6 Albert Road, Plymouth (St. Andrew) $12^2/_3$ yrs

And Catherine Hill married John Foot in 1879, Q4 (Plymouth R.D.). Elizabeth and her unmarried daughter, Annie Hill, appear in the 1881 census for Plymouth St. Andrew (PRO RG11/2199 Fo. 116):•

2 Alvington Place

Agnes March	*Head*	*Mar*	*76*	*Independant*	*Devon, Sth Molton*
Elizabeth H. Tapson		*Mar*	*58*		*London, Holborn*
Ann H. Tapson	*Visitor*	*Un*	*19*		*Devon, Plymouth*

Annie Hill had a Christmas Day wedding in the Plymouth church of St. Andrew:

25 Dec 1883 ***Charles Henry Mullard*** *28 Bachelor Accountant*
3 Alvington Place (Father: William Mullard, Commercial Traveller)
Annie Hill Tapson *22 Spinster*
26 Cambridge Road, Ford (Father: John Tapson, Mason)
by Sup^{t} Reg^{s} Certificate in the presence of Ann Mullard & William Peter Henry White

It is strange that John should be described as a *Mason* in this marriage entry.

The Will of John Tapson dated 17 November 1896

This is the last Will and Testament of me John Tapson of N^{o} 3 Hobart Terrace Plymouth Manager of the Bedford Brewery there. I give unto my Daughter Catherine Hill Foot my household goods and furniture and to my Son John Richard Hill Tapson I give my gold Watch and chain and as respects my freehold house and premises in Youngs Terrace Compton Gifford my monies shares in Public or other Companies bonds and all such real and residuary personal estate as I may die seized or possessed of I

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

give and devise the same unto my Executrix hereinafter named Upon trust to sell and reduce into money such parts as shall not consist of money and ..... to divide the net proceeds and my monies equally between herself the said Catherine Hill Foot my Daughter Annie Hill Mullard and my Son John Richard Hill Tapson in equal shares as tenants in common. I appoint my said Daughter Catherine Hill Foot to be the sole Executrix of this my Will ..... In witness whereof I have to this my last Will set my hand this seventeenth day of November One thousand eight hundred and ninety six
John Tapson

John died at Plymouth on 21 December 1896; his age was correctly given as 64. He was buried at Ford Park Cemetery:

24 Dec 1896 John Tapson 3 Hobart Terrace Plymouth (Charles) 64

Probate of John's will was granted on 22 January 1897 to *Catherine Hill Foot (Wife of John Foot)*, his effects being valued at £787 - 9 - 8.

It comes as a surprise that no mention was made of his wife, Elizabeth Ann, in John's will; her death had not been registered when the will was written, and the only death subsequently registered which could possibly refer to her was in 1904, Q4 (Islington R.D.), when an Elizabeth Ann died at the age of 83, which is reasonably consistent with the age given for John's wife in the census returns. In view of the fact that she was not with John at the time of the 1881 census (no trace of him or of his son, John Richard Hill, at that date has so far been found), one suspects that there may have been a breakdown in the marriage.•

John Richard Hill also seems to have moved to the London area, for the marriage of a *John Richard H. Tapson* was registered in 1897, Q2 (West Ham R.D.) The death was registered (also West Ham R.D.) in 1904, Q3, of a *Lydia Tapson, Aged 40*, presumably John Richard Hill's wife; he would have been 42 years old at the time. Two years later, in 1906, Q4, another marriage was registered (St. George, Hanover Square R.D.) of a *John Richard H. Tapson*; this would seem to have been John Richard Hill's second marriage. There do not appear to have been any children of the first marriage; certainly no birth was registered in the West Ham R.D. during the period of that marriage.

6.28 EBSWORTHY TAPSON, CHEMIST

No baptismal entry has yet been found for Ebsworthy, the youngest son of Ebsworthy and Mary; however, if his age was correctly given in the 1851 census as 11 years, then he would have been about 25 at the time of a *Marriage solemnized at the Register office in the District of Liskeard, in the County of Cornwall:*

2 Aug 1865 ***Ebsworthy Tapson*** *25 Bachelor Chemist*
45 Tavistock Place, Plymouth (Father: Ebsworthy Tapson, Gentleman)
Jane Cecelia Langstone *25 Spinster*
Parish of Saint Cleer (Father: William Langstone, deceased, Captain Merchant Service)
in the presence of Sam[l] Elliot & Wightrick Kelly

Ebsworthy and Jane Cecelia then disappear without trace!•

6.29 JAMES TAPSON OF LAUNCESTON, BUTCHER

The Launceston parish register records the marriage:

1 July 1823 ***James Tapson*** *of this Parish Bachelor &*
Grace Parsons *of this Parish Spinster*
by Banns in the presence of Charles Packard & Elizabeth .....

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

Two baptisms followed at Launceston parish church:

30 Jun 1824 Elizabeth Parsons dau of James & Grace Tapson, Church-Street, Butcher
27 Apr 1828 Catherine dau of James & Grace Tapson, Church-Street, Butcher

Elizabeth Parsons Tapson died in 1826; she was buried at South Petherwin:

29 Jan 1826 Elizabeth Tapson Launceston 1

Another baptism took place at Launceston Wesleyan Chapel:

19 Sep 1832 William son of James & Grace Tapson, Launceston, Butcher

and a burial is recorded in the Launceston parish register:

25 May 1836 Louisa Tapson Church-Street 4

Although no baptismal entry for Louisa has so far come to light,• the Church Street address strongly suggests that she was another daughter of James and Grace. The Launceston section of Pigot's 1830 directory contained the entry, under *Butchers*:

Tapson James, church st.

and the following entry, under *Straw Hat Makers*, would seem to refer to Jame's wife:

Tapson Grace, Southgate st

The Will of James Tapson dated 5 January 1837

In the Name of God Amen I James Tapson of the Borough of Launceston ..... Butcher being sick and weak in Body but of sound Mind Memory and Understanding do make and publish this my last Will and Testament ..... I give and bequeath unto my niece Catherine Smith the sum of Twenty pounds ..... Also I give and bequeath to my two nephews Joseph and William Jeffery the sum of Ten pound each ..... I give devise and bequeath unto my Brother Ebsworthy Tapson Carpenter, William Tapson and George King Mann Innkeepers all of Launceston ..... All and every my Messuages Tenements Dwelling Houses and Malthouse ..... situate in Angel Hill Launceston ..... In Trust .....for my son William Tapson until he shall attain the age of Twenty one Years And ..... after his decease without Issue ..... Then I give devise and bequeath the same (Except the Dwelling House now in the possession of .....Parr Cunningham Hockin which I hereby give devise and bequeath unto the said Catherine Smith .....) unto the said Trustees In Trust for my daughter Catherine Tapson until she shall attain Twenty one Years of age And ..... after her decease without Issue ..... Then I give devise and bequeath the same Messuages unto all and every the Children ..... of my said Brother Ebsworthy Tapson ..... I give devise and bequeath the Dwelling Houses now in my possession and Mr Sims unto my said Trustees In Trust for my said daughter Catherine until she shall attain the age of Twenty one Years And if she dies without Issue ..... Then I give devise and bequeath the said last mentioned Dwelling Houses unto my said Trustees In Trust for my said son William Tapson until he shall attain the age of Twenty one Years But in case my said son should die without Issue Then I give devise and bequeath the last mentioned Dwelling Houses unto my said Wife ..... All and every the before mentioned Messuages Tenements Dwelling Houses and Malthouse ..... I give devise and bequeath the rents Issues and profits unto my Wife Grace Tapson until my said Children shall attain the age of Twenty one Years only provided she shall so long remain a Widow ..... And in case my said Wife should marry again Then in lieu thereof I give and bequeath to my said Wife the clear annual sum or yearly rent charge of Twenty pounds ..... All the rest residue and remainder of my Goods chattles Monies Debts and Securities for Money Stock in Trade, Plate Household Goods and furniture and all other my personal and testamentary Estate ..... I give and bequeath unto my said Wife ..... and I hereby nominate constitute and appoint my said Wife whole and sole Executrix of this my last Will and Testament. In Witness whereof I the said James Tapson the Testator have ..... set my Hand and Seal this fifth day of January in the Year of our Lord one thousand eight Hundred and thirty seven James Tapson

James died exactly a week after making his will, on 12 January 1837; his funeral was held at Launceston parish church:

18 Jan 1837 James Tapson Church-Street 36

The age given suggests that James was born about 1800. His will (CRO) was proved at Launceston on 16 March 1837 (for the Archidiaconal Court of Cornwall), his effects being valued at £300.

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

Grace was still living in Church Street with her two surviving children at the time of the 1841 census for Launceston (PRO HO107/154/1 Fo. 50):

Church Street

Grace Tapson	*40-44*	*Widow*	*Born in Cornwall*
Catherine Tapson	*13*		*Born in Cornwall*
William Tapson	*8*		*Born in Cornwall*

but according to the 1851 census (below) Grace was not born in Cornwall. By 1844 Grace had moved house, for she is listed in Pigot's directory of that year, under *Launceston — Gentry and Clergy*, as:

Tapson Mrs Grace, Northgate street

The marriage of Grace's daughter, Catherine, to William Coad was registered in 1850, Q3 (Plymouth R.D.), and the 1851 census for Launceston (PRO HO107/1899 Fo. 388) shows Grace living alone:

North Gate Street

Grace Tapson	*Head*	*Wid*	*53*	*Annuitant*	*Devon, Sheepwash*

Sheepwash, the parish where Grace was born, is about ten miles east of Holsworthy. It would seem that Grace was running a business in Northgate Street, for in Slater's directory of 1852 she appears under *Shopkeepers & Dealers in Groceries & Sundries*:

Tapson Grace, Northgate street

The Will of Grace Tapson dated 8 January 1857

This is the Last Will and Testament of me Grace Tapson of Launceston in the County of Cornwall Widow I give and bequeath unto my Son William Tapson ..... The following articles of household furniture now in my possession viz[t] The large looking Glass the large table four chairs bed tie bolster and pillows two quilts two blankets two Sheets six silver spoons All my knives and forks my best table cloth bellows and hearth rug And I also give and bequeath unto my said son William ..... one half part or share of all money belonging to me which may be at the time of my decease in the Bank of Messieurs Dingley and Company Launceston Also all policies of Assurance of which I may die possessed and all moneys which after my death may become due by virtue thereof And I also give and devise unto my said Son William ..... All the real estate and chattels real of which I may be seized or possessed at the time of my death Subject nevertheless as to the Garden hereinafter mentioned to the term of years therein hereinafter devised to my Son in Law William Coad ..... I also give and devise unto my Son in Law William Coad All that garden which he now rents of me for the term of six years to commence from the time of my decease at the nominal rent of One penny per year to be paid to my Son William Tapson I also give and bequeath unto my daughter Catherine Coad my large chest of Drawers Subject nevertheless to the payment of the sum of Thirty shillings to my Son William Tapson I also give and bequeath unto my said daughter Catherine Coad ..... All that principal sum of Two hundred pounds now due and owing to me on the security of an equitable charge on certain houses situate in Southgate Street Launceston together with all interest which shall be accrued due thereon at the time of my decease ..... And I also give and bequeath unto Richard Wise of Launceston aforesaid Builder and Samuel Bickle of the same place Carrier ..... All that the moiety half part or share of all moneys which at the time of my decease may be deposited by me in the said Bank of Messieurs Dingley and Company Launceston Upon trust to dispose of the same and the annual interest thereon in such manner in all respects as my said daughter Catherine Coad shall from time to time ..... appoint All the rest residue and remainder of my personal property of which I shall die possessed I give and bequeath unto my said daughter Catherine ..... And I hereby nominate and appoint the said Catherine Coad Executrix of this my Will In witness whereof I have ..... set my hand this eighth day of January One thousand eight hundred and fifty seven Grace Tapson

Grace died on 1 January 1862; her funeral was held at Launceston parish church:

6 Jan 1862 Grace Tapson Fore Street 64

Grace's will was proved at London on 25 January 1862 *by the Oath of Catherine Coad (Wife of William Coad)*; her estate was valued at *under £450*.

6.30 WILLIAM TAPSON OF LAUNCESTON, GROCER

At the time of the 1851 census for Launceston (PRO HO107/1899 Fo. 361) William, the only son of James and Grace, was apprenticed to a grocer who had been one of the witnesses of James's will in 1837:

High Street

Thomas Honey	*Head*	*Mar*	*43*	*Grocer*	*Cornwall,*	*Stratton*
Mary S. Honey	*Wife*	*Mar*	*44*		*„*	*Lanson*
Emma S. Honey	*Dau*		*16*	*Scholar*	*„*	*„*
Edwin Honey	*Son*		*12*	*„*	*„*	*„*
John D. Honey	*Son*		*10*	*„*	*„*	*„*
William Tapson	*Appr*		*18*	*Grocer's Apprentice*	*„*	*„*

William was 22 when his marriage was registered (Launceston R.D.) in 1855, Q1, and by 1856 he was already in business on his own, as is evident from an entry in the Launceston section of Kelly's directory of that year:

Tapson William, Grocer, Church st

William and his wife, Dorcas, are included in the 1861 census for Launceston (PRO RG9/1520 Fo. 6):

Church Street

William Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*28*	*Grocer*	*Cornwall,*	*Launceston*
Dorcas Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*28*		*„*	*Stratton*

Dorcas's place of birth suggests that she was related to Thomas Honey; the marriage certificate would be needed to determine whether or not this was so.

By the time of the 1871 census for Launceston (PRO RG10/2225 Fo. 41) William, still a young man, had given up his business:

Northgate Street

William Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*38*	*Retired Grocer*	*Cornwall,*	*Launceston*
Dorcas Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*38*		*„*	*Stratton*

and his circumstances were unchanged in the 1881 census (PRO RG11/2277 Fo. 51) and also in the 1891 census (PRO RG12/1804 Fo. 42).• Dorcas's death was registered in 1904, Q2 (Launceston R.D.); her age was given as 71.

The Will of William Tapson dated 28 April 1909

This is the last Will and Testament of me William Tapson of Exeter Street in the Borough of Launceston Gentleman I appoint Roger Parsons Honey of Daws House in the parish of South Petherwin in the County of Cornwall and Alfred John Smale of Exeter Street aforesaid Carpenter ..... to be the Executors and Trustees of this my Will I give to Robert Coad of Horsted Keynes East Grinstead in Sussex the sum of Ten pounds I give to the said Alfred John Smale the sum of Fifteen Pounds I give to the said Roger Parsons Honey the sum of Five pounds and ..... I give devise and bequeath all my real and personal estate ..... to the use of the said Robert Coad and Roger Parsons Honey in equal shares absolutely ..... In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand this twenty eighth day of April one thousand nine hundred and nine *William Tapson*

William died on 6 February 1910; his age was correctly recorded as 77. The will was proved at Bodmin on 5 March 1910, William's estate being valued at £153 - 13 - 3. Robert Coad was probably his sister's son.

It is amazing that William was able to retire before he was 38 years old. Both his father and his mother had left him money and property, so possibly he was living on the interest from his capital and on rents from the houses which he had inherited. It is even possible that Dorcas was comfortably provided for when William married her. Both Dorcas and William lived to quite a good age for those days, yet he was far from pennniless when he died.

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

CHAPTER 7

BRIDESTOWE TAPSONS ON THE MOVE (I)

7.1 PLYMOUTH AND DEVONPORT

Now part of Plymouth, to the west of the ancient parishes of Plymouth St. Andrew, Plymouth Charles the Martyr and East Stonehouse (page 33), the ancient parish of Stoke Damerel has long been a very busy and important parish, its population in 1801 being 36% greater than that of the entire city of Exeter. It includes within its boundaries the old town of Devonport which originated with and sprang up around the Royal Dockyard, begun under William III in 1688, and was known as *Plymouth Dock* until 1824 when it was granted its present name by royal charter. Also within the parish of Stoke Damerel is the district known as Morice Town; houses began to appear here about 1700, and by 1733 there was a population of 3,361; by 1783 the population of Morice Town equalled that of Plymouth, and by 1801 had greatly exceeded it. In 1837 Devonport and Morice Town were combined as the Municipal Borough of Devonport.

East Stonehouse and the Municipal Borough of Devonport were amalgamated into an enlarged Borough of Plymouth in 1914. By Royal Letters Patent this borough was designated a city in 1928, and in 1935 the dignity of Lord Mayor was granted to its chief citizen. The City of Plymouth was further extended in 1938 to incorporate the parish of Compton Gifford and parts of the parishes of Egg Buckland, Plymstock, St. Budeaux and Tamerton Foliot.

There is evidence of an early association of members of the Tapson family with Stoke Damerel, which is only nine miles from the village of Buckland Monachorum. Some of its parish registers are lost, but there is a good sequence of bishop's transcripts: by using both sources a fairly complete record of marriages, baptisms and burials dating from 1595 can be obtained. Two children of Richard Tapson of East Stonehouse were baptized at Stoke Damerel in 1654 and 1660 (page 69); in 1692 William Tapson and Frances Mark were married there (page 70); and in the early years of the Eighteenth Century another William Tapson and his wife Mary were established in the parish (page 70): probably all were descendants of William Tapson of East Stonehouse (Chapter 2).

7.2 EBSWORTHY TAPSON OF STOKE DAMEREL, CARPENTER (B#42)

The next Tapson to appear in Stoke Damerel, at the end of the Eighteenth Century, was Ebsworthy Tapson. However, the story of this Ebsworthy and of his descendants begins in the City of London, where he was married in the church of St. Leonard, Shoreditch (GL):

19 Nov 1777 ***Ebsworthy Tapson*** *of this parish Bachelor &*
Frances Bayley *of this parish Spinster by Banns*

and where two children of the marriage were baptized in the church of St. Luke, Finsbury (GLRO):

1 Mar 1778 Mary Anne dau of Ebsworthy Tapson, Carpenter, & Frances (born 3 Feb)
13 Aug 1780 John son of Ebsworthy Tapson, Carpenter, & Frances (born 16 Jul)

During the last quarter of the Eighteenth Century and the first quarter of the Nineteenth Century there was a great influx of people into London from the country; Ebsworthy was one of them and, as a carpenter, he no doubt found full employment in the building of houses needed to accommodate the rapidly increasing population.

The parish register of Plymouth Charles the Martyr records the marriage:

1 Jun 1789 ***Ebsworthy Tapson*** *of this Parish Carpenter &*
Ann Ball *Spinster of the same Parish*
by Banns in the presence of Sarah Pyne & John Brannan

That this was the same Ebsworthy Tapson who in the previous decade had been living in Shoreditch is not immediately obvious, especially since a burial entry for Frances has not yet been found; however, the marriage entry notes that he was a carpenter by trade. After their wedding Ebsworthy and Ann settled in Stoke Damerel, where the baptisms of their children are recorded:

30 May 1790 Ebsworthy son of Ebsworthy & Ann Tapson
10 Jan 1796 Nancy dau of Ebsworthy & Ann Tapson

A series of rental agreements (WDRO 302/1/3P) dating from 1795 to 1809 and relating to the Aubyn Estate in Devonport, name Ebsworthy, his wife Ann, and some of his children:

Tapson, Ebsworthy, of Stoke Damerel (1795, 1796, 1797)
Tapson, Ann, Stoke Damerel (1805, 1808, 1809)
Tapson, Ebsworthy, Stoke Damerel, son of Ebsworthy & Ann Tapson (1795, 1805, 1809)
Tapson, Nancy, Stoke Damerel, daughter of Ann Tapson (1805, 1809)
Tapson, John, Stoke Damerel, son of Ebsworthy Tapson (1795, 1797, 1798).

These documents have now been returned to the depositor, who will not accept any enquiries about them. However, they do inform us that Ebsworthy Tapson of Stoke Damerel had a son John who was old enough to be included in a rental agreement as early as 1795; the John born in London would then have been about 15 years old.

The UNIVERSAL BRITISH DIRECTORY 1793 - 1798, in the section on Plymouth Dock, includes:

Tapson E. Carpenter and Joiner

In this trade Ebsworthy would have had plenty of work during the housing boom in Plymouth Dock and Morice Town. A bill (WDRO 494/4) begins *1798 Additionally Work Done at the Chapel of St. John the Baptist by Messrs Gay and Tapson.* [The chapel was in Duke Street, Plymouth Dock.] There follows a detailed account, for carpentry work and materials, which is then totalled:

	(Total)	*£87 - 6 - 3½*
Lost article deduct		*1 - 5*
		£86 - 1 - 3½
The Original Contract		*527*
		613 - 1 - 3½ *Jnº Arnold*

The bill is accompanied by a receipt:

2d May 1799 Received of Mr Thoms Davis Treasurer to the New Chapel the sum of Two hundred & Twenty three pounds in part of the Annexed Bill £223 - 0 - 0
Jas Gay
Ebsy Tapson

Ebsworthy was buried in the churchyard of the parish church of Stoke Damerel:

18 May 1805 Ebsworthy Tapson

An entry in the Death Duty Register (PRO IR26/342 Admon 169) shows that he had not made a will:

Date Sworn:	*25 July 1805*
Sum Sworn:	*Under £800*
Intestate:	*Elsworthy Tapson of Stoke Damerel*
Administratrix:	*Ann Tapson of same, his widow*

A directory, THE PICTURE OF PLYMOUTH, PLYMOUTH-DOCK, STONEHOUSE, STOKE 1812 by Rees and Curtis, lists Ebsworthy's widow under *Dock*:

Tapson, Ann, Pawnbroker, James Street

A decade later, according to Pigot's 1823-4 directory, her son, Ebsworthy, was living at 60 James Street (page 225). Ann drew up a will, of which a copy was made for the Stamp Duty Office (DRO T86):

The Will of Ann Tapson dated 23 November 1833

In the Name of God Amen I Ann Tapson of Devonport in the County of Devon Widow being in health of body and of sound and disposing mind memory and understanding do make and publish this my last will and Testament ..... I give and bequeath all my Leasehold Messuages Dwelling houses and Tenements and parts and shares of Leasehold Messuages Dwelling houses and Tenements in Devonport aforesaid or elsewhere monies Securities for money debts money in the public funds household furniture plate linen china and all other my testamentary Estate and Effects ..... to my son Ebsworthy Tapson of Devonport aforesaid Coal Merchant ..... Subject to the payment of my just debts and funeral and testamentary charges and expenses and also Subject to the payment out of my said personal property of the full Sum of Twenty pounds unto my Daughter in Law Mary Ann Hockaday of Devonport aforesaid widow in such proportions and at such times as my said Son shall think fit..... and I hereby nominate and appoint my said Son Ebsworthy Tapson Sole Executor of this my will ..... In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this Twenty third day of November One thousand Eight hundred and thirty three *Ann Tapson*

Ann's will was proved on 15 February 1843 in the Archidiaconal Court of Totnes:

Appeared personally Ebsworthy Tapson of 135 Navy Row in the Borough of Devonport in the County of Devon Coal Merchant the Sole Executor named in the will of Ann Tapson late of Devonport who died on the Twenty fifth Day of February 1838 Effects sworn under £200

At this distance in time it is not clear why Ann's son waited for almost five years after her death before proving his mother's will, unless it was to delay the payment of £20 to Ann's Daughter in Law, Mary Ann Hockaday. At that time the term *Daughter in Law* was used to denote a stepdaughter, so it would appear that Mary Ann was Ebsworthy's daughter by an earlier marriage. The Stoke Damerel bishop's transcripts record Mary Ann's marriage:

23 Apr 1816 ***Richard Hockaday*** *of the Parish of Bridestowe Farmer a Bachelor &*
Mary Ann Tapson *of this Parish Spinster*
by Licence in the presence of John Tapson & John Garland

John Tapson Hockaday, *son of Richard and Marianna*, was baptized at Bridestowe on 11 June 1817.

It is now apparent that the Ebsworthy Tapson who was married at Shoreditch in 1777 was the same Ebsworthy who was married at Plymouth Charles the Martyr in 1789. Mary Ann, his daughter by his first marriage, would have been 38 when she married; one of the witnesses was her brother John, who is described in the rental documents as being the *son of Ebsworthy Tapson*, whereas the other son, Ebsworthy, was referred to as the *son of Ebsworthy and Ann Tapson*. The references to Nancy as the *daughter of Ann Tapson* are of later date, after Ebsworthy's death, when Ann was clearly taking over the management of the family affairs. Of further significance is the fact that John was not mentioned in Ann's will even though he was still alive at the time (page 220). [Nancy was not mentioned either, but it is unknown whether or not she was still alive on 23 November 1833 when her mother made her will.]

Ann too was buried in the churchyard of Stoke Damerel parish church. The graves in this ancient burial ground have now been levelled and the headstones, removed from the graves, have been laid flat, some regrettably with their inscriptions downwards, in order to make paths and steps. However, before this happened notes were made of the inscriptions (WDRO 453/5 Page 61), which include:

Ebsworthy Tapson, died 14 May 1805, aged 54
Ann Tapson, died 25 February 1838, aged 85

Ebsworthy's age recorded here presents conclusive proof that he was Bridestowe #42, who would have been in his 54th year on 14 May 1805. He would have been 25 when he married Frances Bayley at Shoreditch and 37 at the time of his marriage to Ann Ball; he had a son and a daughter by each marriage. Ebsworthy died just a month after his father, John, who may have died at Stoke Damerel, but certainly made his will whilst in that parish (Page 153). [It is a curious coincidence that both Ebsworthy and his father married an Ann Ball. Ebsworthy's sister Mary married a George Ball (page 153), his brother Nicholas married a Patience Ball (page 267) and his sister Dionisia married a William Ball (page 153); it was probably his aunt Anne (page 151) who had married a Roger Ball.]

7.3 JOHN TAPSON OF STOKE DAMEREL, BUILDER

Ebsworthy's eldest son, John, was 22 at the time of the marriage recorded in the bishop's transcripts for the parish of St. Stephens by Saltash, on the Cornish side of the Tamar estuary:

*27 Oct 1802 **John Tapson** Joiner & **Maria Broad** Spinster both of Saltash in this Parish by Banns in the presence of Edward Pike & Mary Broad*

A baptismal entry was made in the register of the Princes Street Independent Chapel, Devonport:

8 Apr 1805 Francis dau of John & Maria Tapson (born 12 March 1805)

The masculine form of the name was probably written in error by the minister officiating at the baptism; the intended name was clearly *Frances*, the name of John's mother.

Further children of John and Maria were baptized at Stoke Damerel parish church:●

7 Dec 1814 Ebsworthy John son of John & Maria Tapson, Dock, Builder
2 Nov 1817 Harriet Maria dau of John & Maria Tapson, Dock, Builder
7 Apr 1822 Mary Jane Broad dau of John & Maria Tapson, Dock, Builder

Dock was the shortened form of *Plymouth Dock*, the earlier name for Devonport, and it is under *Dock* that John is listed in the Three Towns directories of 1822 and 1823:

Tapson J. house carpenter, joiner & undertaker, George-lane

The 1841 census for Stoke Damerel (PRO HO107/272/5 Fo. 5) shows John sharing a house with another family and, apparently, a daughter whose baptismal entry has not yet been found:

Georges Lane

John Tapson	*60-64*	*Builder*	*Not born in Devonshire*
Louisa Tapson	*15-19*		*Born in Devonshire*

It is significant that John is recorded as not having been born in Devonshire. He was in his 69th year when he was buried at Stoke Damerel:

26 Aug 1848 John Tapson Workhouse died 21 August 1848 69 years

Louisa is listed in the 1851 census (PRO HO107/1882 Fo. 306) for Stoke Damerel; she would have been born about 1827 if she gave her age correctly in 1851, but at least two years before that if she had been placed in the right age-range in the 1841 census:

Poke(?) Cottage, Church Street

James Eckford	*Head*	*Mar*	*64*	*Colonel in the Army*	*Scotland, Dunfermline*
Louisa Tapson	*Serv*	*Un*	*23*	*Housemaid*	*Devon, Devonport*

● See Appendix VI (Addenda)

7.4 EBSWORTHY JOHN TAPSON OF LIVERPOOL, ACCOUNTANT

John's daughter Harriet Maria married at the church of Charles the Martyr, Plymouth:

29 Mar 1839 ***James Thomas Lucks*** *Full Bachelor Smith Looe Street*
(Father: James Lucks, Rope Maker)
Harriet Maria Tapson *Full Spinster Looe Street*
(Father: John Tapson, Builder)
by Banns in the presence of Robert Lewis & W. Rickard

Ebsworthy John did not use his first name, so it is likely, though not certain, that his was the marriage recorded at the Cornish church of Antony, across the Tamar from Stoke Damerel:•

10 Jun 1833 ***John Tapson*** *of this Parish &* ***Ann Fittock*** *of this Parish*
by Banns in the presence of George Thomson & W^m^ Bunt

This marriage was soon followed by two baptisms at Stoke Damerel:

18 Aug 1834 Frances Jane Broad dau of John & Ann Tapson Devonport Carpenter
4 Apr 1836 Henry John son of Henry John & Ann Tapson Devonport Labourer

It will become apparent later that *Henry John* was written as the name of the father in error for *Ebsworthy John*. The birth of William Barker Tapson was registered in 1844, Q4 (Liverpool R.D.), that of Ann Tapson in 1847, Q3 (West Derby R.D.), and that of John Ebsworthy Tapson in 1849, Q3 (West Derby R.D.). All the family are listed in the 1851 census return (PRO HO107/2190 Fo. 187) for Everton, which is about two miles to the north-east of the centre of Liverpool:

Cobden St

John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*36*	*Attorneys Cl*	*Devonshire*
Ann Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*37*		*„*
Frances Tapson	*Dau*		*16*	*Teacher*	*„*
Henry Tapson	*Son*		*15*	*Ap to Mariner (?)*	*„*
William Tapson	*Son*		*6*		*Lancashire*
Annie Tapson	*Dau*		*3*		*„*
John Tapson	*Son*		*12 mo.*		*„*

The children's ages are all correctly entered in this census return. William Barker, *the son of John Tapson & Ann*, had been baptized at the church of St. Peter, Liverpool, on 10 November 1844.

GORE'S DIRECTORY for Liverpool, 1849, has the entry:

Tapson John, house agent & collector, 31, Elm Grove, Paddington

but that for 1851 gives his Everton address used in the 1851 census:

Tapson John, house agent & collector, 15, Cobden street, Everton

Slater's 1852 directory lists John under *Land & House Agents*:

Tapson John, 15 Cobden st Everton

Gore's 1860 directory indicates that John had made another move, this time into the town, for it was not yet a city, of Liverpool; he had also moved into another profession:

Tapson John, accountant, 50 Wood street

Liverpool was growing rapidly at that time; from a population of only 5,714 in 1700, it had grown to 77,708 by 1800 and then grew to 684, 947 by 1899; the town acquired city status in 1880.

John's *Wood Street* address is given in the 1861 census return for Liverpool (PRO RG9/2673 Fo. 52), which shows that further major changes had occurred in his life:

50 Wood Street

John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*46*	*Accountant*	*Devonshire,*	*Davenport*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*46*		*Lancashire,*	*Liverpool*
Ann Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*13*		*„*	*„*
John Tapson	*Son*		*13*		*„*	*„*
Mary Sutcliffe	*Stepdau*		*12*		*„*	*„*
William Sutcliffe	*Stepson*	*Mar*	*26*	*Carter*	*„*	*„*
Thomas Sutcliffe	*Stepson*	*Un*	*28*	*Carter*	*„*	*„*

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

In the census return the age of John's youngest son, John, should have been entered as 11. The death of John's first wife, Ann, had been registered in 1857, Q4 (West Derby R.D.), and his marriage to Elizabeth Sutcliffe, a widow, in 1860, Q1 (West Derby R.D.). A marriage settlement dated 23 January 1860, drawn up before the marriage, is referred to in Elizabeth's will:

The Will of Elizabeth Tapson dated 2 December 1862

This is the last Will and Testament of me Elizabeth Tapson the wife of John Tapson of Liverpool in the County of Lancaster Accountant Whereas under and by virtue of the Settlement executed previously to my marriage with my said husband dated the twenty third day of January One thousand Eight hundred and sixty, certain household furniture and effects and certain horses carts harness and other articles and things ..... and also a certain sum of Two hundred pounds were assigned and transferred unto Charles Hampson and Thomas Williams Upon Trust as to the said horses carts gears harness articles and things and the sum of Two hundred pounds to manage the said horses and carts and receive and take the earnings and profits thereof and pay the same and all other the income of the said trust fund unto me during my life and after my decease Upon Trust ..... for such person or persons ..... as I should by any Deed or Deeds or by my last Will and Testament or any Codicil direct limit and appoint Now I ..... Do ..... direct limit and appoint that the said household furniture chattels and effects and the said horses carts gears harness articles and things and the said business of a Cart Owner and the profits to be derived therefrom and all other matters and things ..... which shall at the time of my decease be subject to the trusts of the said Settlement (except the said sum of Two hundred pounds which has been by Deed bearing date the twenty second day of October last ..... appointed to the said Charles Hampson and Thomas Williams) shall ..... be paid assigned and transferred to or otherwise vested in my stepson William Sutcliffe absolutely ..... And I direct that my said Stepson shall manage and carry on the said business of a Cartowner and shall ..... sell the said household chattels and effects ..... And shall stand possessed of the said business and of the earnings and profits thereof and of the proceeds of the said furniture ..... Upon Trust as to one equal moiety or half part thereof for himself absolutely and as to the remaining moiety thereof Upon trust to pay and apply the annual income thereof from time to time for the maintenance education and advancement in the world of my daughter Mary Sutcliffe until she shall attain the age of twenty one years or be married ..... And ..... then Upon Trust for her ..... absolutely ..... And I appoint the said William Sutcliffe Executor of this my will. In Witness whereof I the said Testatrix have to this my last Will and Testament set my hand the second day of December One thousand Eight hundred and sixty two (The mark of) Elizabeth Tapson

Thomas Sutcliffe and William Sutcliffe must have been sons of Elizabeth's first husband by an earlier marriage. One assumes that the business and the furniture originally belonged to her first husband, so in the marriage settlement John was assigning to Elizabeth what was rightfully hers but would otherwise have become legally his upon their marriage. It is not clear why Elizabeth's elder stepson, Thomas, should have been excluded from her will. Thomas Sutcliffe was not included in Gore's 1862 directory for Liverpool, which lists in the *Street Index* section:

50 Wood St Sutcliffe William, cart owner
Tapson John, accountant

as well as including in the *Commercial* section:

Tapson John, accountant, 50 Wood st

In Gore's 1865 Liverpool directory William Sutcliffe was again listed as a cartowner at 50 Wood Street, but the entry for John appears as:

Tapson John, victualler, Fox Inn, 23 Ray street Prussia street

However, in Gore's 1870 directory John's former occupation was given:

Tapson John, accountant, 45 Fleet st W.

John had moved to a new address, and the *Street Index* section has:

45 Fleet St Tapson John, accountant
Sutcliffe William, cartowner

That John had financial difficulties whilst licensee of the Fox Inn is clear from a notice in *The London Gazette* of 13 October 1865, page 4889:

> *John Tapson, of No. 23, Ray-street, Liverpool, in the county of Lancaster, Licensed Victualler, and late a Prisoner for Debt in the Liverpool Borough Gaol at Walton, in the county aforesaid, having been adjudged bankrupt by a Registrar of the Court of Bankruptcy for the Liverpool District, attending at the Gaol aforesaid, on the 15th of September, 1865, and the adjudication being directed to be prosecuted at the Court of Bankruptcy for the Liverpool District, at Liverpool, is hereby required to surrender himself to one of the Registrars of the said last-mentioned Court, at the first meeting of creditors to be held before the said Registrar, on the 25th day of October instant, at eleven o'clock in the forenoon precisely, at the said Court, at Liverpool. Charles Turner, Esq., of No. 17c, South Castle-street, Liverpool, is the Official Assignee.*

The London Gazette of 3 November 1865, page 5176, gave notice of *a public sitting, for the said bankrupt to pass his Last Examination, and make application for his Discharge* to be held at the Court on 17th November; and *The London Gazette* of 30 January 1866, page 555, gave notice that the Court had, on 24 January 1866, granted an Order of Discharge to John Tapson.

John and Elizabeth were still at 45 Fleet Street at the time of the 1871 census for Liverpool (PRO RG10/3775 Fo. 19); both of their stepsons, Thomas and William, were living with them. John's age and place of birth given in the census returns establish beyond doubt that he was Ebsworthy John Tapson, the son of John Tapson of Stoke Damerel, builder:

45 Fleet Street

John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*56*	*Cart Owner*	*Devonsh, Stoke Damerel*	
Elizabeth Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*57*		*Lancash, Liverpool*	
Thomas Sutcliffe	*Stepson*	*Mar*	*38*	*Carter*	*"*	*"*
William Sutcliffe	*Stepson*	*Un*	*36*	*Carter*	*"*	*"*
Sidney Smith	*Boarder*	*Un*	*?*	*Carter*	*"*	*"*
Helen ?	*Servant*	*Un*	*?*	*General Servant*	*?*	*?*

Kelly's 1873 Post Office Directory for Liverpool lists, in its *Street Directory*:

45 Fleet Street Sutcliffe William, van propietor

The Will of John Tapson dated 31 December 1873

This is the last Will and Testament of me John Tapson of Liverpool in the County of Lancaster Restaurant Keeper ..... Whereas my wife Elizabeth is already possessed by Marriage Settlement ..... of the entire trade and business of a Cart Owner which she carries on for her own benefit and advantage at Number 45 Fleet Street Liverpool aforesaid it is unnecessary for me to give or bequeath to her any portion of my worldly goods ..... I therefore give devise and bequeath unto Elizabeth Quigley of Liverpool aforesaid Gentlewoman from whom I have received repeated acts of kindness and pecuniary assistance all and singular my right title and interest to and in the Chop House and Restaurant now carried on by me at Number 14 Cable Street Liverpool aforesaid and known as the sign of "the Gridiron" ..... for her own entire use and benefit absolutely And I hereby constitute nominate and appoint the said Elizabeth Quigley of Liverpool aforesaid Gentlewoman my sole Executrix and ..... declare this to be my last Will and Testament bearing date the thirty first day of December in the Year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seventy three *John Tapson*

Ebsworthy John Tapson died on 15 April 1874 at 45 Fleet Street, Liverpool; his age, 59, is correctly given on his death certificate, which names him *John Ebsworthy Tapson*. His will was proved on 18 July 1874, his estate being valued at *under £100*. Elizabeth died at Fleet Street on 18 October 1875; her death certificate gives her age as 62. Her will was proved on 16 March 1876, effects *under £450*. It is surprising that in his will Ebsworthy John made no mention of his children; however, in view of his bankruptcy eight and a half years before he died, he probably had little to leave except the restaurant which he then owned in Cable Street, in which Elizabeth Quigley may have had a financial interest.

Although Ebsworthy John made no mention of his children in his will, no death had been registered for any of them, and they all seem to have married: Ann would have been 18 when an Annie Tapson married William Hughes in 1866, Q1 (Liverpool R.D.); Frances would have been about 35 when a Fanny Tapson married John Falkner Williams in 1869, Q3 (Liverpool R.D.); and Henry John would have been about 36 when a Henry John Tapson was married in 1872, Q2 (West Derby R.D.).• Marriage certificates would provide the information needed to verify whether or not these marriages were of Ebsworthy John's children.

John Ebsworthy would have been 20 when a John Tapson was married in 1870, Q2 (West Derby R.D.), and 31 when his household was included in the 1881 census return for Everton (PRO RG11/3653 Fo. 19):

1 Alma Street

John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*30*	*General Laborer*	*Lancs, Liverpool*
Eliza Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*30*		*Bristol*
Anne Tapson	*Dau*		*7*	*Scholar*	*Lancs, Liverpool*
John Tapson	*Son*		*4*	*„*	*„ „*
Henry Tapson	*Son*		*2*		*„ „*
Eliza Brady	*Boarder*	*Wid*	*54*	*Laundress*	*Ireland, ?*

The births had been registered (West Derby R.D.) of Annie in 1874, Q2, of John William Henry in 1876, Q3, and of Henry in 1879, Q1. Soon after the census, in 1881, Q4, the birth of another child, Alfred Fletcher, was registered (Liverpool R.D.), his parents being described in his birth certificate as *John Tapson, Labourer, and Eliza Tapson, formerly Morgan*. Henry's death at the age of 5 was registered in 1884, Q4 (Liverpool R.D.); and Eliza's in 1891, Q3 (West Derby R.D.), her age being given as 42. John Ebsworthy would have been 71 when the death of a *John Tapson, aged 67* was registered (West Derby R.D.) in 1921, Q1.•

William Barker Tapson was 33 years old when he married Elizabeth Ball in 1878, Q3 (West Derby R.D.). The birth of their daughter Elizabeth was registered, a year later, in 1879, Q3 (West Derby R.D.); she appears in the 1881 census return for Everton (PRO RG11/3653 Fo. 21):

34 Alma St. Sweet Shop

Robert Ball	*Head*	*Mar*	*51*	*Bricklayer*	*Lancs, Liverpool*
Margaret Ball	*Wife*	*Mar*	*49*		*„ „*
Mary E. Ball	*Dau*		*16*	*Shopwoman*	*„ „*
George Ball	*Son*		*12*	*Scholar*	*„ „*
Robert Ball	*Son*		*7*	*„*	*„ „*
Elizabeth Tapson	*GranDau*		*2*		*„ „*

Elizabeth's mother was included as a servant in the return for Liverpool (PRO RG11/3626 Fo. 45):

24 Falkner St

Ann Orrs	*Head*	*Wid?*	*62*		*Kent, Pembury*
.....					
Elizabeth Tapson	*Serv*	*Mar*	*26*	*Cook*	*Lancs, Liverpool*

Further births were registered (West Derby R.D.) of Robert William in 1882, Q3, William in 1885, Q3, and John in 1887, Q2; they all appear in the 1891 census for Everton (PRO RG12/2942 Fo. 26):

34 Alma Street

Elizabeth Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*36*	*Laundress*	*Lancs, Liverpool*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Dau*		*11*	*Scholar*	*„ „*
Robert Tapson	*Son*		*8*	*„*	*„ „*
William Tapson	*Son*		*6*	*„*	*„ „*
John Tapson	*Son*		*4*	*„*	*„ „*
George Ball	*Brother*	*Un*	*22*	*Apprentice Mill Builder*	*„ „*
Robert Ball	*Brother*	*Un*	*17*	*„ ?*	*„ „*

William Barker's death was registered (West Derby R.D.) in 1908, Q2; his correct age of 63 was recorded. If she gave her age accurately in the census returns, his widow would have been just about 81 years old when an *Elizabeth E. Tapson, aged 81*, died in 1935, Q4 (Liverpool North R.D.).•

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

7.5 EBSWORTHY TAPSON OF STOKE DAMEREL, COAL MERCHANT

Nancy, the daughter of Ebsworthy and Ann, was married at Stoke Damerel:

23 Feb 1817 ***George Shannon*** *Cooper and Porter Merchant a Bachelor of this Parish &* ***Nancy Tapson*** *of this Parish by Licence*

Ebsworthy, the son of Ebsworthy and Ann, had also been married at Stoke Damerel:

17 Sep 1811 ***Ebsworthy Tapson & Mary Brock*** *by Banns*

Ebsworthy was 21 at the time of his marriage to Mary; their children were baptized at Stoke Damerel:

5	*Jul*	*1812*	*Emila*	*dau of Ebsworthy & Mary Tapson*
14	*Feb*	*1814*	*Caroline Augusta*	*dau of Ebsworthy & Mary Tapson, Dock, Carpenter*
26	*Feb*	*1816*	*Ebsworthy*	*son of Ebsworthy & Mary Tapson, Dock, Builder*
12	*May*	*1818*	*Ann Louisa Elizabeth*	*dau of Ebsworthy & Mary Tapson, Dock, Builder*
26	*Jul*	*1821*	*Henry Ebenezer*	*son of Ebsworthy & Mary Tapson, Dock, Builder*
3	*Mar*	*1825*	*James John*	*son of Ebsworthy & Mary Tapson, Devonport, Coal Merchant*
14	*Nov*	*1827*	*Charles William*	*son of Ebsworthy & Mary Tapson, Devonport, Coal Merchant*

[The baptism of James John is recorded in the bishop's transcripts for Stoke Damerel — there is a lacuna of a few years in the parish register.]

Rowe's 1814 directory for Plymouth, Plymouth Dock and Stonehouse has the entry:

Tapson, E. Carpenter & Undertaker, Mutton Cove

Pigot's 1823-4 directory (Plymouth section) lists him at a new address under *Coal Merchants*:

Tapson Ebsworthy, 60 James-st PD

PD was the abbreviation for *Plymouth Dock*. An identical entry appears in Pigot's 1830 directory, except that *PD* is now replaced by *Devonport*, the new name of the town from 1824 (page 217).

Two of the children of Ebsworthy and Mary were buried at Stoke Damerel:

20 Jun 1828 William Charles Tapson, James St, 8 months

14 Aug 1835 Emily Tapson, Back of York Building, 23

Charles William (as he was christened) and Emily were buried in the same grave; their headstone, now forming part of a path in the churchyard (page 220), has the inscription:

Sacred to the memory of CHARLES WILLIAM TAPSON
who died June 17th 1828 Aged 8 Months
Also EMILY TAPSON
who died August 8th 1835 Aged 23 years
Son and Daughter of Ebsworthy and Mary Tapson of this Parish

The headstone is at the north side of the churchyard, just below the second step from the top.

The surviving daughters of Ebsworthy and Mary were both married at Stoke Damerel:

9 Jun 1841 ***Richard Davies*** *Full Bachelor Merchant*
Newport, Monmouthshire (Father: James Davies, Farmer)
Caroline Augusta Tapson *Full Spinster*
1 Morice Square, Stoke Damerel (Father: Ebsworthy Tapson, Merchant)
in the presence of John Tapson & Henry E. Tapson

and

24 Jun 1844 ***George Frederick Webber*** *Full Bachelor Foreman of Works in the Royal Engineer Department*
George Street (Father: John Webber, Builder)
Ann Louisa Elizabeth Tapson *Full Spinster*
135 Navy Row (Father: Ebsworthy Tapson, Coal Merchant)
by Licence in the presence of Emma Tapson & M. Webber

The *Navy Row* address given by Ann Louisa Elizabeth at the time of her marriage was the new home of her parents; this is confirmed by Pigot's 1844 directory for Plymouth:

Tapson Ebsworthy, Coal Merchant, 135 Navy Row, Morice Town•

The entry in WHITE'S DEVONSHIRE DIRECTORY for 1850, under *Devonport — Coal Merchants*:

Tapson, Ebsworthy, Tamar Wharf, home 79 Navy Row

shows that either Ebsworthy had again moved house or Navy Row had been renumbered. Ebsworthy's new address appears again in the 1851 census return for Stoke Damerel (PRO HO107/1882 Fo. 410):

Tenement, 79 Navy Row

Ebsworthy Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*60*	*Coal Merchant*	*Devon, Stoke*
Mary Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*65*		*„ „*
Ann Webber	*Dau*	*Mar*	*32*	*Clerk's Wife*	*„ „*
James Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*26*	*Undergraduate, Cambridge University*	*„ „*
Anne Webber	*Gd Dau*		*5*		*„ „*
Mary Parkhouse	*Serv*	*Un*	*21*		*„ „*

Ebsworthy's business is listed in Slater's directory of about 1852/3 (Plymouth section):

Tapson, Ebsworthy, coal merchant, Tamar Coal Wharf, Morice Town, and Cherry Garden St, Devonport

and William's 1847 directory for Cornwall shows that a branch of the business was already established on that side of the Tamar, at Torpoint:

Tapson Ebsworthy, Coal-dealer, Ferry-street

The Torpoint address appears again in Kelly's 1856 directory. Ebsworthy's home address remained unchanged in BILLINGS' DIRECTORY OF DEVON 1857, where it was listed under *Morice Town*:

Tipson, Ebsworthy, coal merchant, 79 Navy Row

but Elvins's 1867 directory for Plymouth, Devonport and Stonehouse gives a new address:

Tapson Ebsworthy, coal merchant, 74 Albert road

The Will of Ebsworthy Tapson dated 27 June 1868

This is the last Will and Testament of me Ebsworthy Tapson of the parish of Stoke Damerel in the County of Devon Gentleman I give devise and bequeath all my freehold hereditaments and real estate and also all my leasehold premises and other my personal estate ..... unto and to the use of my son The Reverend James John Tapson Clerk in Holy Orders and my friend John Thomas Webber of Plymouth ..... Warehouseman ..... Upon Trust ..... in manner following that is to say As to and concerning one equal undivided moiety ..... that they ..... convey assign transfer and pay the same moiety and premises unto and to the use of my son the said James John Tapson ..... absolutely ..... And as to and concerning the remaining one equal undivided moiety ..... that they ..... convey assign transfer and pay the same moiety and premises unto and to the use of the said John Thomas Webber and my friend John Summers James of Plymouth ..... Coal Factor ..... Upon trust that they ..... convey transfer assign and pay ..... the same moiety ..... unto such person or persons and in such parts shares and proportions ..... as my daughter Ann Louisa Elizabeth Webber notwithstanding coverture shall at any time ..... direct or appoint ..... and after the decease of my said daughter ..... to convey assign transfer and pay the same unto between and among all and every the children of my said daughter who shall then be living and shall then have attained or thereafter attain the age of twenty one years ..... in equal shares ..... I appoint the said James John Tapson and John Thomas Webber Executors of this my Will ..... In witness whereof I have to this my last Will and Testament ..... set my hand this twenty seventh day of June in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty eight Ebsworthy Tapson

The inscription on the family vault at Ford Park Cemetery records that Mary died at Navy Row on 18 November 1859, aged 74 years, and Ebsworthy at Albert Road on 8 January 1869, aged 78 years. Ebsworthy's will was proved at London on 6 February 1869; his effects were valued at *under £14,000*. The death of Ann Louisa Elizabeth Webber on 6 December 1890, at the age of 72, is also recorded in the inscription on the family vault.

•See Appendix VI (Addenda).

7.6 JAMES JOHN TAPSON OF HOOE, CLERK IN HOLY ORDERS

A summary of the career of Ebsworthy's son James John Tapson appears in the 1897 edition of CROCKFORD'S CLERICAL DIRECTORY:

Tapson, James John, Hooe Vicarage, Plymstock, Devon.
Corpus Christi College, Cambridge; deacon 1851; priest 1852, Exeter.
Vicar of Hooe, Diocese of Exeter 1870.
(Patron, Keeble College, Oxford, Court of Chancellor £28. Fees £6.
Queen Anne's Bounty £43. Ecclesiastical Commission £251.
Gross income £328; net £319 and House. Population 1364.)
Acting Chaplain to the Forces at Staddon Station 1870 (income £75).
Formerly Curate of Stoke Damerel 1851-52, Probus 1852-54, Callington 1854-60,
Chaplain Royal Laboratory and Magazines, Bull Point 1865-70

The *Alumni Cantabrigienses* gives further details:

Tapson, James John. Admitted pensioner at Corpus Christi Jan 30, 1851
Of Devon (son of Elsworthy of Stoke Damerel) Matriculated Michaelmas 1851
Ordained deacon (Ely) 1851; priest 1852
Curate of Stoke Damerel 1851-2, Curate of Probus 1852-4, Curate of Callington 1854-60,
Curate of St John, Clapham 1860-1
Chaplain, Royal Laboratory and Magazines, Bull Point, St Budeaux 1868-70
Vicar of Hooe, Plymouth, 1870 -1904. Died c Nov 29, 1904, Aged 79.
[Crockford: Clergy List, The Times Dec 1, 1904]

The curacy of St. John, Clapham, included in this account, seems to be the result of confusion with Robert Tapson of St. Germans (page 253), who was curate at St. John's from 1860 to 1862; but no further information has come to light about the period between 1860 and 1865 (to take Crockfords's dates for the Bull Point chaplaincy as probably the more reliable of the two).

James John was married in his church at Hooe, a modern parish carved out of the ancient parish of Plymstock:

17 Jun 1878 ***James John Tapson*** *Full Bachelor Clerk in Holy Orders*
Hooe Vicarage (Father: Ebsworthy Tapson, Gentleman)
Julia Elizabeth Callaway *Full Spinster*
Hooe (Father: Richard Mahany Callaway, Retired Officer R.N.)
by Licence in the presence of Robenia Ellen Luxton, John Shelly & Alexander Burns Osborne

The Hooe register also records the baptism of a daughter:

26 Sep 1880 Edith Emily dau of James John & Julia Elizabeth Tapson, Hooe Vicarage, Clerk in Holy Orders (J. Cox Edwards, officiating minister)

The 1881 census for Plymstock (PRO RG11/2185 Fo. 144) shows that James John and Julia Elizabeth already had another daughter:

James John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*56*	*Vicar of St Johns Hooe*	*Devon, Stoke Damerel*
Julia E. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*29*		*„ Plymstock*
Julia M. A. Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*1*		*France, British Subject*
Edith E. Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*7 mo.*		*Devon, Plymstock*
Mary E. Hammet	*Serv*	*Un*	*20*	*Domestic Servant*	*„ Wembury*
Maria M. Hammet	*Serv*	*Un*	*18*	*Cook*	*„ „*
Nancy Carwither	*Serv*	*Un*	*16*	*Nursemaid*	*„ Plymouth*

The elder daughter is named in full, as *Julia Mary Annie*, in her father's will (page 228).•

WILLIAM WHITE'S *PLYMOUTH, HISTORY & DIRECTORY*, 1890, lists under *Plymstock*:

Tapson Rev James John Vicar of Turnchapel

and Kelly's 1893 directory for Devonshire, under *Court Directory*, has the entry:

Tapson Rev James John M.A. Turnchapel, Hooe, Plymouth

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

The Will of James John Tapson dated 3 April 1903

This is the last Will and Testament of me James John Tapson of Hooe Vicarage in the county of Devon Clerk in Holy Orders I appoint my friends John Shelly of Plymouth Solicitor and the Reverend Joseph Mercer Cox Vicar of Plympton St Mary Devon ..... to be the Executors and trustees of this my will ..... I give and bequeath the sum of one hundred pounds to the said John Shelly and the sum of one hundred pounds to the said Reverend Joseph Mercer Cox ..... And I give and bequeath all my furniture and household goods and effects and my books and my Organ now standing and used by my permission in the Parish Church at Hooe ..... unto my two daughters Julia Mary Annie Tapson and Edith Emily Tapson equally to be divided between them And I give devise and bequeath all the residue of my estate and effects ..... unto my trustees Upon trust to pay thereout unto Sarah Callaway now residing at Plymouth an annuity of forty pounds a year ..... and subject thereto Upon trust to pay or apply the whole or such part of the income of my trust estate as my trustees shall from time to time in their discretion think fit in or towards the maintenance and education or otherwise for the benefit of my said two daughters ..... until the younger of my said two daughters shall attain the age of twenty five years .....and upon the younger of my said two daughters attaining the age of twenty five years ..... I give devise and bequeath the whole of the residue of my estate and effects ..... unto my two daughters in equal shares ..... In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand ..... this third day of April one thousand nine hundred and three
Jas J Tapson

James John Tapson died on 29 November 1904 at the age of 79 years; the brief announcement of his death in *The Times* of 1 December 1904 credits him with being the vicar of Hove (near Brighton in Sussex)! His memorial in the church at Hooe, where he was vicar for almost 35 years, also records the death of his wife, Julia Elizabeth, on 2 December 1895, aged 44 years. It was perhaps her mother who received an annuity under the terms of James John's will. Probate was granted on 23 January 1905, effects being valued at £33,963 - 14 - 8; one of the executors, John Shelly, had been a witness at James John's wedding. At the time of James John's death Edith Emily was 24 years old and Julia Mary Annie about a year older, so they would not have had very long to wait for their inheritance. The two sisters moved to London, where the marriages were registered (St. George, Hanover Square, R.D.) of Julia Mary Annie to George L. Crossman in 1914, Q2 and of Edith Emily to Hugh S. Andrewes in 1915, Q4.

7.7 EBSWORTHY TAPSON OF NEWPORT, COAL MERCHANT

The 1841 census return (PRO HO107/715/16 Fo. 43) for the district of Pillgwenlly in Newport, Monmouthshire (now Newport, Gwent) has the following entry:

David Davies	*50-54*	*Ind*(ependent)	*Not born in Monmouthshire*
Ebsworthy Tapson	*25-29*	*Coal Merchant*	*Not born in Monmouthshire*
Rachel Tapson	*20-24*		*Born in Monmouthshire*
Geo. Webber	*25-29*	*General Merchant*	*Not born in Monmouthshire*
Johanna Williams	*20-24*	*Female Servant*	*Not born in Monmouthshire*

Ebsworthy Tapson, the eldest son of Ebsworthy and Mary, would have been 25 at the time of the census. Newport is on the Severn estuary at the mouth of the river Ebbw, so it seems likely that this Ebsworthy, also described as a coal merchant, was involved with the shipment of Welsh coal from the Ebbw Vale coalfields to his father and perhaps to other coal merchants in Devon and Cornwall. In 1841 he and his wife, Rachel, were sharing a house with David Davies, who may have been the father of both Rachel, whose maiden name was Davies (page 229), and Richard Davies, the future husband of Ebsworthy's sister Caroline Augusta; Richard's address at the time of their marriage was Newport (page 225). Another member of the household was George Webber, perhaps the future husband of Ebsworthy's other surviving sister, Ann Louisa Elizabeth (page 225). The death was registered in 1841, Q4 (Newport R.D.) of Ebsworthy's brother Henry Ebenezer Tapson, so it would seem that he too had been involved in the Newport outpost of the family business.

Soon after the census, in 1841, Q4, the birth of the first of Ebsworthy's three sons, Alfred Henry, was registered (Newport R.D.); the birth of the second, Ebsworthy David James, was registered in 1843, Q2 (Newport R.D.); the birth, in about 1845, of a third son, John R. W. (page 232) was not registered. Alfred Henry (according to one of his grandsons, Paul Ebsworthy Tapson) was born on 18 October 1841 at Pillgwenlly. By 1847 Ebsworthy and Rachel had moved to St. Mellons, near Cardiff, where Mary Anne Emily was born on 12 January; her birth certificate records that she was the daughter of Ebsworthy Tapson, a merchant living at Lanrumney Hall, and Rachel Tapson, formerly Davies. A second daughter was baptized at the church of St. Mary, Cardiff:

*20 May 1849 Caroline Josephine Ada, dau of Ebsworthy Tapson & Rachel**

The death of Caroline Josephine Ada was registered in 1849, Q2 (Cardiff R.D.).

The family have not yet been found in the 1851 census: Paul Ebsworthy, mentioned above, has been told that they moved to Cork, in southern Ireland; certainly Ebsworthy's death was not registered in England or Wales. However, the marriage of Alfred Henry was registered in 1863, Q1 (Cardiff R.D.), that of Ebsworthy David James in 1867, Q1 (Newport R.D.), and that of Mary Anne Emily in 1867, Q2 (Newport R.D.), and the 1881 census shows Ebsworthy's widow, Rachel, living with Alfred Henry in Newport (below); so perhaps the family returned to Wales after Ebsworthy died in Cork. Some credence is given to this story by the fact that at the time of the 1881 census Ebsworthy David James was employing a servant who had been born in Cork (page 231).

7.8 ALFRED HENRY TAPSON OF NEWPORT, SHIP BROKER

Alfred Henry Tapson married Eliza Jane Scantlebury in 1863, Q1 (Cardiff R.D.); the births of their children were registered in the Newport Registrar's District: Edward Sutton Ronschild in 1863, Q3; Annie Maud in 1865, Q2; Beatrice Mary in 1867, Q1; Alfred Henry in 1868, Q4; Alfred Staples in 1870, Q1, Alexander Malcolm in 1872, Q1, Ebsworthy James in 1874, Q3, James Octavius in 1875, Q3; Winifred Mabel in 1878, Q1; and Blanche Muriel in 1879, Q1. Beatrice Mary was baptized in the parish church of Pillgwenlly, Newport:

*20 Jan 1867 Beatrice Mary dau of Alfred Henry & Eliza Jane Tapson**

and James Octavius in the parish church of St. Woollos, Newport:

*6 Sep 1875 James Octavius son of Alfred Henry & Eliza Jane Tapson**

The death of Beatrice Mary was registered in 1873, Q4; she would have been almost 7, the age recorded on her death certificate. It seems that Alfred Henry also died in infancy, before the christening of Alfred Staples, though his death was not registered. [The assumption has been made, without checking his birth certificate, that Alfred Henry was a son of Alfred Henry, otherwise James Octavius would not have been the eighth child as his name implies.] All the other children are included in the 1881 census for the parish of St. Woollos, Newport (PRO RG11/5263 Fo. 29):

70 Stow Hill

Alfred H. Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*39*	*Ship Broker*	*Monmouth,*	*Newport*
E. J. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*37*		*Cornwall,*	*Fowey*
Rachel Tapson	*Mother*	*Wid*	*62*		*Monmouth,*	*Newport*
Edward R. Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*17*	*Clerk to Ship Broker*	,,	,,
Annie M. Tapson	*Dau*		*16*	*Scholar*	,,	,,
Alfred J. Tapson	*Son*		*11*	,,	,,	,,
Alexander M. Tapson	*Son*		*9*	,,	,,	,,
Ebsworthy J. Tapson	*Son*		*6*	,,	,,	,,
James O. Tapson	*Son*		*5*	,,	,,	,,
Winifred M. Tapson	*Dau*		*3*	,,	,,	,,
Blanche M. Tapson	*Dau*		*2*		,,	,,
Ada Rapbel	*Serv*	*Un*	*17*	*General Servant*	,,	*Pontypool*
Jane Smith	*Serv*	*Un*	*15*	*Nurse*	,,	*?*

The birth of another daughter, Louie Mildred, was registered (Newport R.D.) in 1891, Q3.•

*International Genealogical Index — not checked in parish register.

•See Appendix VI (Addenda).

Edward Sutton Ronschild married Hilda Moore Billingham (Newport R.D.) in 1891, Q2; Alexander Malcolm married Emily Edwards (Newport R.D.) in 1894, Q1; Ebsworthy James married Ellen Mary Knight (Chepstow R.D.) in 1902, Q2; Winifred Mabel married William B Morgan (Bristol R.D.) in 1917, Q4; and Louie Mildred married Ernest William Frost (Newport R.D.) in 1917, Q2.

Kelly's 1901 Post Office Directory for Newport lists, under *Private Residents*:

Tapson Alfred Henry, Rougemont, Woodland Rd

and, under *Commercial*:

Tapson Alfred H. & Co ship & insur. brkrs. 104 Dock st

The 1901 directory for Cardiff also lists Alfred Henry's office in that city, and that of one of his sons:

Tapson Alfred H. & Co ship brokers & coal exporters, 48 Mount Stuart Square

Tapson Alexander Malcolm, solicitor & notary public, 17 Church Street

In his will, dated 16 August 1898, Alexander Malcolm named his wife, Emily, as sole executor and sole legatee. He must have been in financial difficulty when he died in 1911, Q1, (Cardiff R.D.) aged 39, for *Administration (with will)* was granted on 19 April 1911 to *William Henry Hewett a creditor.*•

The Will of Alfred Henry Tapson dated 12 December 1920

This is the last Will and Testament of me Alfred Henry Tapson of 54 St Pauls Road Clifton in the County of Bristol ..... I appoint my Son Ebsworthy James Tapson of Lloyds Bank House Kingswood in the County of Gloucestershire and __ of __ in the County of __ (sic) *to be Executors and Trustees to this my Will ..... I give devise and bequeath unto my dear wife Eliza Jane all that I die possessed of and after her decease to my daughter Annie Maud In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand this twelfth day of December One thousand nine hundred and twenty* *Alfred H Tapson*

One of the witnesses of the will was *E. J. Tapson Lloyds Bank House Kingswood Bank Manager.* Alfred Henry was 80 when he died at 54 St Pauls Road Clifton on 12 May 1922; probate was granted on 1 June 1922, effects being valued at £1,075 - 18 - 11. The death of his widow, Eliza Jane, at the age of 78 was registered soon afterwards, in 1922, Q3 (Bristol R.D.).

The Will of Annie Maud Tapson dated 30 September 1922

This is the last Will and Testament of me Annie Maud Tapson ..... I appoint Blanche Muriel Tapson of 25 Porchester Terrace London ..... to be the Executrix of this my will ..... I give and bequeath my plot of ground at Grasmere near Johannesburg and all my Koffyfontein Diamond Mines shares to my brother James Octavius Tapson I give everything else of real & personal property to my sister Blanche Muriel Tapson Witness my hand this Thirtieth day of September 1922 Annie Maud Tapson

Annie Maud, who did not marry, died on 17 August 1923 at Koffyfontein in the Orange Free State, South Africa, but an affidavit was filed that she was a British Subject and had made her will in England. Probate was granted on 2 February 1924 to Blanche Muriel Tapson, Spinster; her effects were valued at £500. Annie Maud was 58 years old when she died.•

The Will of Blanche Muriel Tapson dated 20 July 1923

This is the last Will and Testament of me Blanche Muriel Tapson of 25 Porchester Terrace Hyde Park London W.2 Trained Nurse ..... I give devise and bequeath all my estate of whatsoever nature and wheresoever situate unto my Sister Louie Mildred Frost the Wife of Ernest William Frost of No. 5 West Park Road Newport in the County of Monmouth and I appoint my said Sister sole Executrix hereof In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand this 20th day of July 1923 *B. M. Tapson*

Blanche Muriel died on 8 May 1935 at Hastings, though her home address was given as Flat 485, Marina, St. Leonards-on-Sea; her age was correctly recorded as 56. Probate was granted at Landaff on 25 June 1935, her estate being valued at £568 - 18 - 8.

•See Appendix VI (Addenda).

7.9 EBSWORTHY DAVID JAMES TAPSON OF PENARTH, MANAGER

The marriage of Ebsworthy David James Tapson and Martha Jordan was registered in 1867, Q1 (Newport R.D.). This was followed by the birth of Constance Mary at Bassaleg, near Newport, in 1867, Q4. The family then moved to the industrial district of Tredegar, some 15 miles north-west of Newport between Ebbw Vale and Merthyr Tydfil, where Gertrude Marion was born in 1869, Q4. They appear in the 1871 census for the hamlet of Manmoel (PRO RG10/5322 Fo. 36):

No 2 Villa

Ebsworthy D. J. Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*28*	*House Agent at Iron Works*	*Mon,*	*Newport*
Martha Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*23*		*„*	*Pontypool*
Constance M. Tapson	*Dau*		*3*		*„*	*Bassally*
Gertrude M. Tapson	*Dau*		*1*		*„*	*Tredegar*
Maria Jordan	*Sister-in-law*	*Un*	*19*		*„*	*Newport*
Sarah Evans	*Serv*	*Un*	*16*	*General Servant*	*„*	*Tredegar*

Manmoel hamlet is a few miles south-east of the town of Tredegar; the Electoral Register 1874 for Monmouthshire, District of Tredegar, Parish of Bedwelty, Hamlet of Manmoel, has the entry:

Tapson, Ebsworthy David James, Windsor Villa, Tredegar. House and Lands as Tenant

The family were still at Tredegar when the birth of Ethel Madeleine was registered in 1873, Q3, and that of Dora May in 1876, Q2, but they had moved to Penarth, on the coast just south of Cardiff, by 1879, Q4, when the birth of their youngest child, Charles Ebsworthy, was registered. The 1881 census for Penarth (PRO RG11/5289 Fo. 3) has the entry:

7 Clive Place

Ebsworthy D. J. Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*38*	*Manager of Patent Fuel Works*	*Monmouthshire,*	*Newport*
Martha Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*33*		*„*	*Pontypool*
Constance M. Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*13*	*Scholar*	*„*	*Bassaleg*
Dora M. Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*4*	*„*	*„*	*Tredegar*
Mary Jordan	*Wife's Sister*	*Un*	*30*	*N. K.*	*„*	*Newport*
Katherine Walsh	*Servant*	*Un*	*37*	*General Serv*	*Ireland,*	*Cork*
Charles E. Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*1*		*Glamorgan,*	*Penarth*

Gertrude Marion and Ethel Madeleine were visiting William Hamilton, a *Civil and Mining Engineer*, and his family at Bedwelty (PRO RG11/5242 Fo. 135); their place of birth was given as Tredegar.

Gertrude Marion's marriage to Herbert William Jones was registered in 1890, Q3 (Cardiff R.D.), but Ethel Madeleine was living at home at the time of the 1891 census for Penarth (RG12/4402 Fo. 121):•

11 Clive Pl

Ebsworthy D. J. Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*48*	*Secretary to Patent Fuel Co.*	*Mon,*	*Newport*
Martha Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*43*		*„*	*Pontypool*
Charles E. Tapson	*Son*		*11*	*Scholar*	*Glam,*	*Penarth*
Ethel M. Tapson	*Dau*		*17*		*Mon,*	*Tredegar*
Rachel Tapson	*Mother*	*Wid*	*72*		*„*	*Arged(?)*
Fanny Peardon	*Serv*	*Un*	*29*	*General Servant*	*Brecknoch,*	*Hay*

Rachel's death, at the age of 92, was registered in 1911, Q1 (Newport R.D.). And Charles Ebsworthy would have been 34 years old when a *Charles E. Tapson* married Eleanor Coath in 1914, Q3 (Bridgend R.D.). Bridgend is about 20 miles west of Penarth.

The Will of Ebsworthy David James Tapson dated 25 July 1879

This is the last Will and Testament of me Ebsworthy David James Tapson of Woodbine Villa Penarth South Wales I give all the real and personal estate to which I shall be entitled ..... at the time of my decease unto and to the use of my dear Wife Martha Tapson ..... And I appoint my said dear wife sole Executrix of this my will As Witness my hand this Twentyfifth day of July 1879 Ebsy D J Tapson

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

Constance Mary Tapson died on 24 February 1917; administration of her estate, valued at £55 - 11 - 0, was granted to *Ebsworthy David James Tapson of 36 Bryngwyn Road, Newport, Retired Merchant* on 4 May 1917. Ebsworthy David James died at St Andrews, Liphook, Hampshire on 11 December 1919, leaving estate valued at £321 - 12 - 0; probate was granted on 4 February 1920. Martha's death was registered (S.W. Surrey R.D.) in 1944, Q2; the age of 96 given for her is consistent with the ages recorded in the census returns.•

7.10 JOHN R. W. TAPSON OF HOLYHEAD, RAILWAY WAREHOUSEMAN

After the marriage at the parish church of Walton-on-the-Hill, Lancashire, some three miles north-east of Liverpool city centre:

30 Sep 1872 ***John Tapson*** *Full Bachelor Mariner Everton*
(Father: Ebsworthy Tapson, Coal Merchant)
Catherine Roberts *Full Spinster Everton*
(Father: Richard Roberts, Game Keeper)
by Banns in the presence of Rowland Hughes & Esther Meadows

the births were registered (Anglesey R.D.) of Robert in 1874, Q2, and Catherine Maud in 1878, Q3.

The birth of another daughter, Rachel, was not registered, but she was included in the 1881 census return for Holyhead (PRO RG11/5594 Fo. 142):

11 London Road

John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*36*	*Railway Warehouseman*	*Monmouth, Newport*
Catherine Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*34*		*Anglesey, Aberffraw*
Robert Tapson	*Son*		*6*		*„ Holyhead*
Rachel Tapson	*Dau*		*4*		*„ „*
Catherine Tapson	*Dau*		*2*		*„ „*
Frederick Pryse	*Boarder*	*Mar*	*39*	*Stone Mason*	*Staffsh, Newcastle*
William Roberts	*Boarder*	*Un*	*30*	*Stone Mason's Labr*	*Aston Nr Nantwich*

Although John's birth had not been registered, the name and occupation of his father given in the marriage entry, and his place of birth given in the census return, leave no doubt about his identity; it seems that he named his eldest daughter after his mother. He would have been born about 1845.

Two more births were registered (Anglesey R.D.): Mary Annie E. in 1881, Q3, and Gladdies Marion in 1884, Q4. All the children except Rachel were at home for the 1891 census for Holyhead (PRO RG12/4680 Fo. 87):

2 Railway Cottage off London Rd

J. R. W. Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*44*	*Warehouseman*	*Monmouth, Newport*
Cath Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*44*		*Anglesey, Aberffraw*
Robt Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*17*	*Clerk*	*„ Holyhead*
Cath Maud Tapson	*Dau*		*12*		*„ „*
M. A. Emily Tapson	*Dau*		*9*		*„ „*
Gladys M. Tapson	*Dau*		*6*		*„ „*

The death of Catherine, John's wife, was registered (Holyhead R.D.) in 1898, Q2; her age was given as 49, but to be consistent with the ages given for her in the census returns it should have been 50 or 51. The marriage of John's son, Robert, was registered (Holyhead R.D.) in 1898, Q4. And the marriage of *John Robert W. Tapson* in 1898, Q4 (Barton I. R.D.) seems to have been John's second marriage, for the family then left Anglesey to settle at Salford, near Manchester,• where were registered, in very quick succession, the marriages of Rachel Mary E. in 1905, Q1; of Catherine Maud also in 1905, Q1; of Gladys Marion in 1905, Q2; and of Mary Emily in 1905, Q4. The death of *John R. W. Tapson, aged 85* was registered (S. Manchester R.D.) in 1933, Q4; the ages given for him in the census returns are inconsistent, but he would probably have been a little older, when he died, than the 85 years recorded.

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

7.11 JOHN TAPSON OF ST GERMANS, SCHOOLMASTER (B#43C)

PIGOT & Co's LONDON & PROVINCIAL COMMERCIAL DIRECTORY for 1823-4 describes the Cornish town of *St. Germains*, across the Tamar from Plymouth, as:

> *An inconsiderable borough town, having no claims to our notice but its antiquity, the interesting grounds of Port Elliott, the seat of the Earl of St Germains, and the venerable appearance of the church. The proprietors of what are called burgage tenements, not more than ten, and an unlimited number of censors, have the privilege of sending two members to parliament. The town is governed by a portreeve, chosen annually at the court leet of the lord of the manor; this officer is also bailiff of the borough. There is no market day.*
> *Fairs, May 28th and August first. The population of the borough and parish is 2,404.*
> *POST OFFICE Nicholas Stripp, Post Master. The mail to London, and the east, every afternoon at three. To Truro, and the west, every morning at eight. COACHES The Royal Mail passes the road to and from London every morning and evening, about a mile & half from the town.*

St. Germans remained a *rotten borough* until the Parliamentary Reform Act of 1832. The 1830 edition of Pigot's directory gives the additional information about St. Germans that:

> *St Germains (sometimes improperly written as 'St Germans') is a parliamentary borough and parish, in the south division of East hundred; 226 miles from London, about nine from Devonport, and eight from Liskeard. ..... The houses are nearly all built upon an irregular rock, in the form of an amphitheatre, washed by the river Tidy, which empties itself into Plymouth sound ..... The portreeve ..... can make any house in the place the prison of the person he arrests ..... In the town is a methodists' chapel, and a free-school supported by the Elliot family. The parish, which is the largest in the county, being full 20 miles in circumference, has within its limits a greater number of gentlemen's seats and lordships than any other in Cornwall.*

The earliest recorded appearance of a member of the Tapson family in St. Germans (or St. Germains!) is that of Christopher Tapson of Calstock, who signed the Protestation Oath at St. Germans in 1642 (page 77); however, his name does not appear in the registers of that parish, which survive from 1590. The first mention of a Tapson in the St. Germans registers seems to be of John Tapson, who made his home in that parish. This John Tapson was married at Rame, the Cornish parish at the mouth of the Tamar estuary, about six miles south-east of St. Germans:

> *31 Oct 1782* ***John Tapson*** *of the Parish of Stoke Climsland &*
> ***Grace Martin*** *of the Parish of Rame*
> *by Licence in the presence of John Tapson Senr & John Hawton*

The Cornish parish of Stoke Climsland is about 12 miles north of St. Germans and nearly 15 miles south-west of Bridestowe; it was in this parish that the first child of John and Grace was baptized:

> *7 Aug 1783 James Martin son of John & Grace Tapson*

The circumstances of John's move to St Germans have been recorded in the Vestry Minute Book for that parish (CRO DDP68/8/1):

> *At a Vestry held in the Schoolhouse this 16th day of January 1784. Proposals for agreeing with Mr Tapson as Schoolmaster for St Germans. First the Parishioners on their part in Vestry Assembled do agree to make up to him the sum of Twenty Pounds pr Annum. And in the following manner (that is to say) by the rents of the Estate or fields called Whites crofts in the parish of Menheniot ..... which suppose may set for Clear £7 10s 0d and by the following Subscribers (that is)*

		£	s	d
Edward Eliot Esqr	*pr Annum*	*5*	*5*	*0*
Darell Trelawny Esqr	*Do*	*2*	*2*	*0*
Francis Glanvill Esqr	*Do*	*2*	*2*	*0*
Lady Copley	*Do*	*2*	*2*	*0*
Revd Mr Thos Penwarne	*Do*	*1*	*0*	*0*

Tho if at any time hereafter ..... the sum Subscribed and the Estate falls short of Twenty Pounds the Parishioners on their part Jointly agree to make good that sum provided that he Mr Tapson shall Teach or cause to be Taught to Reading Twelve Poor Children of this Parish to be named by the Majority of the Parishioners ..... and it is likewise agreed with Mr Tapson that he shall out of the Number of Twelve Poor Children ..... Cause six of them to be Taught Reading Writing and the four Rules of Arithmetick Addition Subtraction Multiplication and Division but no more than six shall be ever Ordered by the Vestry at any one time to Writing and Arithmetick ..... Mr Tapson on his part to use his utmost Exertion and Ability to Instruct the Children so committed to his charge and care in Reading Writing and Arithmetick and carefully to watch over their Morals by preventing and punishing all obscene talk Swearing lying and taking the sacred name of God in vain and by every means in his power to Inculcate Virtue and discourage Vice.

The minutes go on to describe the method of choosing six children to be taught writing and arithmetic, and the conditions of employment. The agreement was very neatly signed by *John Tapson*.

The accounts of the Overseers of the Poor for the parish (CRO DDP68/12/3 & 4) include among the disbursements for the first half of 1784 (dated 1785):

To Mr Tapson Bill for Books for ye Poor Children		*8*	*8*

and for the second half of that year:

Paid Mr John Tapson on Acct of the School	*7*	*10*	*0*
Pd Mr Tapson for Books for School house		*8*	*8*

Disbursements for 1785 (dated 1786) include, for each half-year:

To Mr Tapson for Books & firing for ye Poor Children		*15*	*1*

Those for 1786 (dated 1787), for each half-year:

To Mr Tapson for books & firing for Poor Children		*14*	*7*

For the first half of 1787 (dated 1788):

To Mr Tapson towards his rent £5 & for firing etc £1 - 13	*6*	*13*	*0*

and for the second half:

To Mr Tapson in Consideration of his House Rent	*5*	*0*	*0*
To Mr Tapson for the Deficiency in his Salary of £20 per Annum Occasioned by the Death of Lady Copley	*1*	*1*	*0*
To Mr Tapson for Books 4s & firing for the Poor Children 8s		*12*	*0*

For each half of the years 1788, 1789, 1790 and 1791 the disbursements to Mr Tapson are:

To Mr Tapson in Consideration of his House Rent	*5*	*0*	*0*

A copy of part of an extraordinary letter written to him by John Tapson was entered into one of his journals by James Chubb, an Excise Officer and Methodist Lay Preacher. These journals were given to the Methodist Church and some of them are now in the small Methodist museum at Trewint, near Altarnun, in Cornwall. Mrs Evelyn Pickess (née Chubb) of Bristol has a copy of the journals, from which she has kindly extracted the following:

From John Tapson Schoolmaster, St. Germans, Cornwall, 3 July 1785.

"My Dear Friend, I wish to be more thankful to God for your good advice. I pray it may not be lost. Oh, wretch that I am how can I be delivered from this hugh Body of Sin. Oh my Brother offer up a prayer to your God to give me Faith that I may lay hold on the Atoning Sacrafice. I am glad you are walking in the good old way, through a World of Cares and Sorrows, having respect to the recompence of reward."

I believe my Visits in St. Germans was useful to many especially to the above, and not in vain.

He left a Testimony of a good Conscience and went to his Heavenly Fathers house on

This is the end of James Chubb's entry: there is no date. One wonders what could have been John's *hugh Body of Sin*: it was probably no more than would be considered a minor misdeanour in these final years of the Twentieth Century; but in the religious fervour of the early decades of Methodism any *backsliding*, however trivial, might have aroused great feelings of guilt among the pious.

John nevertheless went on to become a pillar of society in St. Germans, for he was one of those who signed the Vestry Minutes on 27 February 1789, 1 October 1789, 26 November 1791 and 2 March 1792, and his signature also appears in the accounts for the Overseers of the Poor for February 1789, September 1789, November 1789 and February 1792.

During this period of his life four more sons were born to John and Grace; all were baptized in the parish church of St. Germans:

3 Apr 1786 John son of John & Grace Tapson
10 Feb 1788 William son of John & Grace Tapson
4 Oct 1789 Joseph son of John & Grace Tapson
28 Sep 1791 Thomas son of John & Grace Tapson

but Thomas's funeral soon followed:

11 Oct 1791 Thomas Tapson Age 2 weeks

The next entry in the parish register was that of the funeral of John himself:

13 Jul 1792 John Tapson Age 34

This was precisely the age at that date of Bridestowe #43c, baptized on 11 June 1758 (page 152), the son of John Tapson #20, who was one of the witnesses at the wedding at Rame (page 233).

A month after John's death the following entry was made in the Vestry Minute Book:

At a Vestry held this 10th day of August 1792 of which proper Notice was given on Sunday last in the Church for the purpose of electing and Choosing a proper Person for the office of Schoolmaster for this Parish in the room of Mr Tapson deceased It is hereby resolved and agreed on Unanimously by us who have hereunto subscribed our Names that ..... Mr Robert Brickwood of the Parish of Maker is a Person well Qualified for that office ..... But his Pay and Salary to commence from Michaelmas next to which Time the Proffits of the said School shall belong to Mrs Tapson the Widdow ..... And Mrs Tapson is to deliver a List of the several things that belong to the Parish to one of the Churchwardens And in future on the Schoolmaster keeping an Assistant We the Parishioners do hereby agree to pay the said Master towards such additional expense the Sum of Five guineas

Robert Brickwood held the post of Schoolmaster at St. Germans for nearly 46 years. He is listed under St. Germans in the UNIVERSAL BRITISH DIRECTORY 1793-1798 as:

Brickwood __ , schoolmaster

and in Pigot's 1823-4 directory as:

Brickwood, Robert, auctioneer and schoolmaster

John Tapson's brother Robert (Bridestowe #44) moved to St. Germans with his wife sometime after 1793; he is shown in a plan of St. Germans dated 1831 as joint tenant with Robert Brickwood Junior (son of John's successor as schoolmaster) of a slaughter house (page 158).

When John died in 1792 his widow, Grace, was left with four sons aged 8, 6, 4 and 2 to provide for. She is listed in the UNIVERSAL BRITISH DIRECTORY 1793-1798 under *Traders*:

Tapsom Mrs, shopkeeper

and her name appears again in the only land tax assessment to have survived for *St Germains*, thought to date to about 1800 (CRO AD103/228):

TENEMENT	*PROPRIETOR*	*OCCUPIER*	*SUM EXONERATED*		
Bunsels Meadow	*Lord Elliot*	*Grace Tapson*	*0*	*4*	*1*
Barnstable Inn	*Honble Lord Elliot*	*Grace Tapson*	*0*	*2*	*1½*

Grace was buried at the parish church of St. Germans:

30 Mar 1833 Grace Tapson Age 77

According to the age recorded here Grace would have been born about 1755 and so would have been about three years older than her husband. The burial at St. Germans of John's brother Robert on 24 Nov 1838 has already been noted (page 158).

7.12 JAMES MARTIN TAPSON OF ST GERMANS, COAL MERCHANT

The following appeared in *The London Gazette* of Tuesday, 19 May 1818:

St German's, May 11, 1818

Notice is hereby given that the Copartnership subsisting between Susanna Little and James Martin Tapson, of the Borough of St. German's, in the County of Cornwall, as Coal-Merchants, was dissolved by mutual consent on the 20th day of March last — The said business will in future be carried on by the said James Martin Tapson only, by whom all debts due to and owing on the said Copartnership will be received and paid

Susanna Little
James Martin Tapson

The eldest son of John and Grace would have been 34 at the time of this announcement, and 42 when Letters of Administration of his estate (valued at £4,000, but resworn as *under Five Thousand Pounds*) were granted in London by the Prerogative Court of Canterbury (PRO PROB6/202 Fo. 300):

Administration of the Estate of James Martin Tapson dated 5 May 1826

On the fifth day Administration of the Goods Chattels and Credits of James Martin Tapson late of Kings Arms Yard Coleman Street in the City of London Bachelor deceased was granted to John Tapson the natural and lawful Brother having been first Sworn duly to Administer — Grace Tapson Widow the natural and lawful Mother and next of kin having first renounced the Letters of Administration of the Goods of the said Deceased.•

7.13 JOHN TAPSON, ROYAL NAVY, PURSER

An Admiralty document entitled *A List of the Pursers, Gunners, Boatswains and Carpenters of His Majesty's Fleet: with the dates of their First Warrants. Admiralty Office Apr 1 1810* (PRO ADM118/192) has the entry:

John Tapson *30 Jan 1808*

The second son of John and Grace was 21 when he received his first warrant as a purser. The duties of a purser were to oversee the supply and issue of victuals, slops (clothes) and other consumable ship's stores; pursers were not professionally examined, but they had to provide financial sureties.

John should have given his age as 24 in his Exeter Marriage Allegation (DRO):

28 Apr 1810 ***John Tapson*** *Bachelor Purser of H.M.S. Pegasus &*
Ann Kelly *Spinster of Callington*
(Signed: Jn° Tapson Aged 25 Purser Royal Navy)

John and Ann were married in Callington parish church:

1 May 1810 ***John Tapson*** *Purser &* ***Ann Kelly*** *of this Parish Spinster*
by Licence in the presence of Sarah Hodge & Wm Hendry(?)

Among the *Papers Relating to Services of Pursers 1834* is a letter to the Secretary of the Admiralty (PRO ADM6/194 Paper 259) from *John Tapson Purser Ret 5 Lloyd Street, Pentonville.* The letter, dated 25 May 1836, is a request for his name *to be placed on the List for the increased Half Pay.* [Half Pay, a retainer for the services of unemployed officers, was first paid to pursers in 1814; before the introduction of any general schemes of retirement it was frequently used as a form of superannuation.] In support of his application John had to fill in a form giving details of his service:

Name	*Age in July 1834*	*Length of Service in the Navy*			*To state whether able and willing to serve at Sea if called on*
		No of Years	*Afloat as Purser or Acting Purser*		
			in War	*in Peace*	
John Tapson	*48*	*28*	*7*	*6½*	*Yes*

The letter was endorsed *No objection 6 June 36.*•

•See Appendix VI (Addenda).

John was included in the household of his brother William at St. Germans in the 1841 census (page 239). Also included was a Mary Tapson, in the same age-range as John, who may have been his second wife; but there is as yet no evidence of the death of Ann, or of a second marriage, or of any children that John may have had. John was buried at St. Germans:

17 Sep 1853 John Tapson Age 67

His age is correctly given. Letters of Administration of his estate (valued at £5,000, but resworn as £6,000) were granted by the Prerogative Court of Canterbury (PRO PROB6/229 Fo. 198):

Administration of the Estate of John Tapson dated 20 October 1853

On the twentieth day Admon of the Goods Chattels and Credits of John Tapson late of Saint Germans in the County of Cornwall Esquire a Widower deceased was granted to William Tapson the natural and lawful Brother and next of kin having been first sworn duly to Administer

7.14 WILLIAM TAPSON OF ST GERMANS, COAL MERCHANT

The following marriage entry appears in the St. Germans parish register:

23 May 1815 ***William Tapson*** *of the Parish of Tavistock in Devon, Watchmaker and a Bachelor &* ***Elizabeth Little*** *of this Parish Spinster by Licence in the presence of Rob^{t} Tapson, Henry Cornish, Jane Skin Popplestone & James Martin Tapson*

The St. Germans register also tells us that Elizabeth Little was baptized on 30 May 1794, the daughter of John and Elizabeth Little, so that at the time of her marriage she would have been just 21 years old and William 27. Elizabeth's parents, John Little, a grocer, and Elizabeth Cornish, had been married at St. Germans on 30 April 1789, and had had two sons before Elizabeth was born, Henry (born 30 May 1790) and John (born 29 December 1791). Henry Cornish, one of the witnesses at the wedding, must have been a relative of Elizabeth on her mother's side; Robert Tapson, another witness, was presumably William's uncle who had moved to St. Germans probably soon after 1793 (page 235), and James Martin Tapson was William's eldest brother.

According to the marriage entry William was already living at Tavistock, the town in which the newly-wed couple then set up home. The register of the Tavistock Wesleyan Chapel (PRO RG4/341) records the baptisms of their first two children:

Henry Cornish, the Son of William & Elizabeth Tapson of the Parish of Tavistock, County of Devon, was born on Monday the 8th Day of April 1816; and being as it was apprehended at the point of death was privately Baptized on Thursday the 18th Day of April 1816

John, the Son of William & Elizabeth Tapson of the Town and Parish of Tavistock, Devon, was Born 3 March 1817 and Baptized the 30 March 1817

The register also contains the following entry:

Memorandum. Henry Cornish the Son of William & Elizabeth Tapson of the Parish of Tavistock of the County of Devon was Born on Monday the 8th Day of April 1816 and was publicly Baptized on Monday the 24 Day of June 1816

The *Transactions of the Devonshire Association* Vol 78, 1946 (WSL) record for the year 1816 (*Early Methodism in Tavistock*, page 243):

September 30 Mr Tapson's Bil for Chains, Snuffers, etc 17s 4d

and for the year 1819 (*The Tavistock Library*, page 231):

The first home of the Library was at the shop of Mr W^{m} Tapson, a Bookseller

and (*The Tavistock Library*, page 235):

The first librarian of which there is any record was Mr W^{m} Tapson, a bookseller. He offered to do the work gratis if he might supply all the books and papers, but in 1806 he was paid £4 4s per annum. In 1819 he was succeeded by Samuel Best

That these references are to John's son seems highly probable: being a bookseller does not exactly square with being a watchmaker as he was described in the marriage entry, but it is likely that he merely sold (and perhaps even repaired) watches, along with numerous other small items (such as chains, snuffers and books) — that he was in fact a *mercer*, as people in that trade were known. That William was a mercer is borne out by the following baptismal entries in the St. Germans parish register:

5	*Nov*	*1820*	*Emma*	*dau of William & Elizabeth Tapson, St. Germans,Shopkeeper*
2	*May*	*1822*	*William Henry*	*son of William & Elizabeth Tapson, St. Germans, Mercer*
7	*Mar*	*1824*	*Joseph*	*son of William & Elizabeth Tapson, St. Germans, Mercer*
13	*Oct*	*1825*	*James*	*son of William & Elizabeth Tapson, St. Germans, Mercer*
20	*Jul*	*1827*	*Joseph Alfred*	*son of William & Elizabeth Tapson, St. Germans, Coal-Merchant*
18	*Jun*	*1829*	*Robert*	*son of William & Elizabeth Tapson, St. Germans, Coal-Merchant*
20	*Apr*	*1831*	*Elizabeth Grace*	*dau of William & Elizabeth Tapson, St. Germans, Coal-Merchant*

These baptismal entries indicate that William and Elizabeth had already moved back to St. Germans by 1820, the year after Samuel Best took over as the Tavistock librarian; this fact provides further circumstantial evidence that the Tavistock references are to John's son William. That he and Elizabeth were living in St. Germans as early as March 1820 is confirmed by the following burial entries in the register of that parish:

4	*Mar*	*1820*	*Henry Cornish Tapson*	*Age 4*
11	*Mar*	*1820*	*William Tapson*	*Age 1*
19	*Mar*	*1824*	*Joseph Tapson*	*Age 12 days*
1	*Jan*	*1834*	*Elizabeth Grace Tapson*	*Age 3*

Although Henry Cornish Tapson had been privately baptized at Tavistock ten days after his birth when *at the point of death*, he survived until he was nearly 4 years old. There is no baptismal entry for William in either the St. Germans parish register or the Tavistock Wesleyan register. Joseph must have been baptized immediately after his birth because he was not expected to survive.

William's changing business interests are reflected in Pigot's directories, where he is listed in the St. Germans section in 1823-4 under *Merchants & Traders* as:

Tapson Wm. grocer & coal dealer

and in 1830 under *Shopkeepers & Traders* as:

Tapson William, Shopkeeper, St Germains

In spite of the insistence in the 1830 directory on the spelling *St. Germains* (page 233), by 1844 Pigot had bowed to the inevitable and listed, under *Merchants*:

Tapson William, St Germans

It is interesting that William was already described as a coal dealer as early as the 1823-4 directory, as was his cousin Ebsworthy at Stoke Damerel (page 225); it seems quite likely that William took over the coal business from his brother James Martin when the latter moved to London, where he died about 1826 (page 236). Moreover, James Martin's former business partner, Susanna Little, may well have been a relative of William's wife, Elizabeth (née Little). And it was probably Elizabeth's father, John, whose name had been included many years earlier in the UNIVERSAL BRITISH DIRECTORY 1793-1798:

Liddle John, shopkeeper

A receipt preserved at the back of the journals of James Chubb (page 234) proves that William was already a coal merchant by February 1822; the signature was probably that of his wife, Elizabeth:

Mr. Chubb			***Bought of William Tapson,***			
1822	*Quarters*	*Bushels*			*£.*	*s.* *d.*
Febry 21		*2*	*Sunderland Coals, at 17/*		*0*	*4* *3*
22		*6*	*Do*	*@ 17/6*		*13* *1½*
						17 *4½*
May 2			*Received E. Tapson*			

The *Explanatory Notes* to a plan of St. Germans dated 1831 (CRO DDP68/28/2, 3) lists William's holdings in the borough:

Number	*Tenement*	*Quantity*	*Tenant*
6	*Lower bow Park*	*2 - 3 - 1*	*Wm Tapson*
45	*Orchard*	*1 - 3*	*„*
89	*Orchard*	*21*	*„*
98	*Lowr Gally Mw*	*1 - 0 - 22*	*„*
131	*House & Garden*	*35*	*„*
132	*House & Garden, Stable*	*14*	*Ann Congdon, Wm Tapson*

An explanation of the *Quantity* column is given on page 158.

William's household is recorded thus in the 1841 census return for St. Germans (PRO HO107/135 Fo. 15):

Market St., Borough

William Tapson	*50-54*	*Merchant*	*Born in Cornwall*
Elizabeth Tapson	*45-49*		*Born in Cornwall*
Emma Tapson	*20-24*		*Born in Cornwall*
William Tapson	*15-19*		*Born in Cornwall*
James Tapson	*15-19*		*Born in Cornwall*
Robert Tapson	*12*		*Born in Cornwall*
John Tapson	*55-59*	*Navy*	*Born in Cornwall*
Mary Tapson	*55-59*		*Not born in Cornwall*
Susan Hockin	*20-24*	*Female Servant*	*Born in Cornwall*

John Tapson was William's elder brother, who would have been 55 at the time of the census, and Mary was possibly John's second wife (page 237). Two of William's sons, John aged 24 and Joseph Alfred aged 13, were not at home.

James had also left home by the time of the 1851 census (PRO HO107/1900 Fo. 257) for St. Germans:

William Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*63*	*Coal Merchant & Lime Burner*	*Cornwall,*	*St Germans*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*56*		*„*	*„*
Emma Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*30*		*„*	*„*
William H. Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*29*	*Coal Merchant & Lime Burner*	*„*	*„*
Robert Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*21*	*Merchant's Clerk*	*„*	*„*
Mary Couch	*Serv*	*Un*	*23*	*House Servant*	*„*	*Linkinhorne*

The 1851 census return, in which all the ages are correctly recorded, shows that William Henry had already entered his father's business; by the date of Slater's directory (about 1852/3) he had been made a partner, for under *Merchants* in St. Germans appears:

Tapson Wm & Son St Germans

By 1856 William, who would have been 68 in that year, had handed his business over to his son, for in Kelly's directory for that year under *Traders* in St. Germans is the entry:

Tapson William Henry & Co coal & general merchants, & at Polbethick

Polbathick, as it is more correctly spelt, is a hamlet about one mile from the village of St. Germans.•

The 1861 census return for St. Germans (PRO RG9/1524 Fo. 25) confirms that William was no longer involved in the business:

Fore Street

William Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*73*	*Retired Merchant*	*Cornwall,*	*St Germans*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*66*		*„*	*„*
Emma Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*40*		*„*	*„*
Elizabeth Peters	*Serv*	*Un*	*27*	*House Servant*	*„*	*„*

•See Appendix VI (Addenda).

The Will of William Tapson dated 24 September 1856

In the Name of God I William Tapson of St Germans ..... do make this my last Will & Testament in manner & form following I give ..... unto Elizabeth Tapson my Wife all my goods chattels estate & effects ..... I also nominate ..... my said Wife Sole Executrix of this my last Will & Testament and ..... I do hereby appoint and constitute my sons John Tapson M.D. and Joseph Alfred Tapson Surgeon both of Clapham Surrey in conjunction with their Mother joint Managers for the better realizing and securing any property that may belong to my Wife by this my last Will & Testament In witness whereof I the said William Tapson have hereunto set my hand & seal this twenty fourth day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty six *William Tapson*

The witnesses to William's will were his daughter Emma and his son Robert. William died at St. Germans on 13 September 1870, leaving effects valued at *under £200*. His burial entry in the St. Germans parish register gives his correct age:

17 Sep 1870 William Tapson Age 82

William's will was proved at London on 25 November 1870 *by the oath of Elizabeth Tapson, Widow*.

In Kelly's 1856 directory, under the heading *Gentry*, appears:

Tapson Wm Henry, esq. Elm Cottage

By 1861 Elm Cottage was occupied by two spinsters, but the 1871 census return for St. Germans (PRO RG10/2230 Fo. 19) sees Elm Cottage once again occupied by members of William's family:

Elm Cottage

Elizabeth Tapson	*Head*	*Wid*	*76*		*Cornwall,*	*St Germans*
Emma Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*50*		*„*	*„*
James Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*45*	*(N.S.)*	*„*	*„*
Susan Jasper	*Serv*	*Un*	*34*	*General Serv Domestic*	*„*	*Laneast*

Kelly's 1873 directory carries the entries, under *Private Residents*:

Tapson James, Elm Cottage
Tapson Miss, Elm Cottage
Tapson Mrs, Elm Cottage

Both Kellys 1878 directory and HARROD'S ROYAL COUNTY DIRECTORY OF CORNWALL 1878 list at St. Germans:

Tapson Mrs, Elm Cottage
Tapson Miss, Elm Cottage

Included in the 1881 census return for St. Germans (PRO RG11/2281 Fo. 21) is:

1 Fore Street

Elizabeth Tapson	*Head*	*Wid*	*86*		*Cornwall,*	*St Germans*
Emma Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*60*		*„*	*„*
Sarah A. Keast(?)	*Serv*	*Un*	*25*	*General Serv Domestic*	*„*	*„*

Elizabeth died a few years later and Emma in 1898; both were buried at St. Germans:

7 Jan 1884 Elizabeth Tapson Age 89
11 Mar 1898 Emma Tapson Age 77

The Will of Emma Tapson dated 22 June 1896

This is the last Will and Testament of me Emma Tapson of St Germans Cornwall I give devise and bequeath all and every my household furniture linen and wearing apparel books plate pictures china and also all and every sum and sums of money ..... and also all my stocks funds and securities for money and all and every other my real and personal estate and effects ..... unto my three brothers John Tapson MD of 32 Vanbrugh Park Blackheath Joseph Alfred Tapson L.R.C.P of the Grove Clapham Common and the Rev^{d} Robert Tapson recently the Incumbent of All Saints Church Sidmouth at present without a fixed address in equal shares ..... And I nominate constitute and appoint the aforesaid brothers ..... to be Executors of this my Will ..... In Witness whereof I the said Emma Tapson have to this my last Will and Testament set my hand the twenty second day of June in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and ninety six *Emma Tapson*

7.15 WILLIAM HENRY TAPSON OF ST GERMANS, MERCHANT

By 1852 William's son William Henry had been made a partner in his father's business which by 1856, probably after William's retirement, had become a limited company (page 239). A bill head* found in the muniment room at Port Eliot, the seat of the Earl of St Germans (page 233), probably dates to around this period:

Bought of W. H. Tapson and Co. Ltd.,
Coal, Lime, Brick, Guano, Bone Dust and Phosphates rendered at the lowest prices possible.
Peruvian Guano imported direct from A. Gibbs and Son.
Stores at St. Germans and Polbathick

The Polbathick store was included in the listing for the business in Kelly's 1856 directory (page 239).

In 1852 William Henry also became involved in mining activities, as we learn from an indenture granting a lease, to William Henry and others, of land on which to search for metallic minerals (CRO DDR4896):

Assignment of Lease dated 1 June 1852 (Abstract)

Indenture dated 1 June 1852 between

1. Augustus Coryton of Pentillie Castle, Cornwall, Esquire
2. John Key of Tavistock, Mine Agent
   Burgess Oliver of Calstock
   John Hambly of Calstock, Mine Agent
   Martin Rickard of Menheniot, Gent
   Tapson of St Germans, Merchant

hereinafter referred to as Miners

Witnesses that Augustus Coryton, in consideration of the rents dues and payments hereby reserved doth demise and grant unto the Miners his mines veins and beds of metal and metallic ores within or under all that farm and lands called Trehunsey in the parish of Quethiock for a term of 21 years from 1 June 1851.

Although only his surname appears in the list of *Miners*, the indenture was signed *W^m^ Henry Tapson.* Quethiock is the parish immediately to the north of St. Germans parish. The mining venture seems not to have been particularly successful, for on the back of the indenture is written another indenture terminating the lease:

Termination of Lease dated 10 October 1863 (Abstract)

Indenture dated 10 October 1863 between

1. John Hambly
   Martin Rickard
   William Henry Tapson
2. Augustus Coryton

Explains that the Shareholders of the Mining Company have discontinued and abandoned prosecution of the Mines and Workings and have requested Augustus Coryton to accept a surrender and to release them from the agreements, to which request Augustus Coryton has consented.
Witnesses that Augustus Coryton doth absolutely remise, release, quitclaim and discharge the said parties hereto of the first part.

William Henry was married at Landrake, a small parish adoining St. Germans:

10 Mar 1853 ***William Henry Tapson*** *Full Bachelor Coal Merchant St. Germans*
(Father: William Tapson, Coal Merchant)
Jenny Spiller *Full Spinster Landrake*
(Father: William Spiller, Yeoman)
by Licence in the presence of R.E. Reaper (?), Eliz^th^ Spiller & S.E. Spiller

*J. THOMAS & H.D. THORNE: A History of the Town of St. Germans, Vol 3

After his entry in Kelly's 1856 directory (page 239) and his inclusion as one of the parties in the termination of the mining lease in 1863, nothing more is heard of William Henry until his burial and the burial of his wife at Landrake, the parish where they were married:

29 Dec 1904 William Henry Tapson Landrake Church Town 82
1 May 1907 Jenny Tapson Prospect Cottage Landrake Church Town 81

It is curious that his sister Emma did not mention William Henry in her will (page 240), although he was still alive at the time; she left everything to her brothers John, Joseph Alfred and Robert, all of whom were quite comfortably well-off. No will was proved for William Henry.•

7.16 JAMES TAPSON, MERCHANT

William Henry's brother James is another shadowy figure. In 1851 he seems to have been living in an apartment in London, where he is included in the census for Covent Garden, St. Paul (PRO HO107/1511 Fo. 84):

20 Southampton St

James Tapson Lodger Un 25 Commission Agent Cornwall, St. Germans

Southampton Street leads southwards off the old Covent Garden Market, from 1670 until 1974 the principal market in London for fruit, vegetables and flowers. It seems likely, therefore, that he was the same James listed in Kelly's 1851 London Post Office Directory:

Tapson James, potato salesman, 23 James st, Covent Garden

James Street leads northwards off the old Covent Garden Market. Perhaps James was an agent for Cornish potato growers, who have long been noted for their early crops of potatoes and other produce which the mild winters in Cornwall make possible.

At the time of the 1871 census, when he was 45 years old but still unmarried, James was living in St. Germans with his mother and sister at Elm Cottage, the address also given for him in Kelly's 1873 directory for Cornwall (page 240). Kelly's directory of the same year for Devonshire, however, has the intriguing entry under *Coal & Coke Merchants*:

Tapson James, 61 Albert road & Tamar Wharf, Morice Town, Devonport

Ebsworthy Tapson of Stoke Damerel had died at 74 Albert Road just four years before, in 1869; and he had established his business at Tamar Wharf, Morice Town, as well as, on the Cornish side of the Tamar, at Ferry Street, Torpoint (page 226). Ebsworthy's eldest son, Ebsworthy, had moved to Newport and was probably dead by 1873 (page 229); his second son, Henry Ebenezer, had died at Newport in 1841 (page 228); so his only surviving son was James John, but he was already vicar of Hooe by 1873 (page 227) when his name is included in Kelly's directory for Devonshire:

Tapson Rev James John, M.A., Turnchapel, Plymstock, Plymouth

Since Ebsworthy had no son to whom he could leave his business, which is not mentioned in his will, the almost inevitable conclusion must be that the James Tapson at 61 Albert Road in 1873 was James Tapson of St. Germans, who was perhaps managing the Stoke Damerel business but returning from time to time to St. Germans about 8 miles away, either by rail across Brunel's bridge opened in 1859 (page 82) or by road and ferry, and this would account for his listing there also in Kelly's 1873 directory for Cornwall. Like William Henry, James was not mentioned in the will of his sister, Emma; his death seems not to have been registered, so it is possible that he died abroad.•

Further light is thrown upon Ebsworthy's former business, as it was in 1873, by THORNE'S THREE TOWNS' DIRECTORY of that year, which has the entry under *Stoke & Morice Town*:

Tapson and Co, Coal merchants, Tamar Wharf, Morice Town

and carries an advertisement:

ESTABLISHED 50 YEARS TAPSON & CO., COAL MERCHANTS TAMAR WHARVES, MORICE TOWN, DEVONPORT
BEST SUNDERLAND, NEWCASTLE, NEWPORT, and HULL COAL supplied at lowest prices from ship's-stores

Ebsworthy's business was indeed already established 50 years before (page 225); it is even possible that the Stoke Damerel and the St. Germans coal businesses had combined as *Tapson & Co*.

•See Appendix VI (Addenda).

7.17 JOHN TAPSON OF CLAPHAM & BLACKHEATH, SURGEON & G.P.

William's eldest surviving son, John, was 24 years old when he was married at the church of St. James, Westminster (CWAC):

1 Feb 1842 ***John Tapson*** *Full Bachelor Esquire Clapham*
(Father: William Tapson, Merchant)
Susanna Harriet Johnson *Full Spinster Sackville St.*
(Father: Charles Johnson, Merchant)
by Licence in the presence of W.C. Ward & Rob[t] Springett

Robert Springett was a nephew of the wife of John's uncle Joseph (page 255). The births of their first three children were registered at Wandsworth R.D.: William John in 1843, Q3; Frances Elizabeth in 1845, Q3; and Marion in 1847, Q2.

The family appears in the 1851 census for Clapham (PRO HO107/1576 Fo. 539):

High Street, Clapham

John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*34*	*M.R.C.S., L.S.A. Surgeon & General Practitioner*	*Devon,*	*Tavistock*
Susannah H. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*39*		*Surrey,*	*Camberwell*
William J. Tapson	*Son*		*7*		*„*	*Clapham*
Frances E. Tapson	*Dau*		*5*		*„*	*„*
Marion Tapson	*Dau*		*4*		*„*	*„*

together with a male servant, aged 19, and three female servants, aged 39, 24 and 44.

John's medical qualifications are detailed in the LONDON & PROVINCIAL MEDICAL DIRECTORY for 1855:

Tapson, John, Clapham-rise, Surrey
M.D. Kings Coll, Univ. Aberd. 1851; M.R.C.S. Eng. 1839; L.S.A. 1838;
Med. Off. Clapham Gen. Disp.

John had obtained his M.D. at Kings College, University of Aberdeen, after his marriage and the births of his first three children; the birth of his youngest child, Alice, was registered (Wandsworth R.D.) in 1853, Q4. By 1855 John and his family had moved from the High Street to Clapham Rise; a further move, to Clapham Common South, is indicated by the 1860 London & Provincial:

Tapson, John, East Lodge, Clapham Common S.
M.D. Kings Coll, Aberd. 1851; M.R.C.S. Eng. 1839; L.S.A. 1838;
Late Med. Off. Clapham Gen. Disp. Fell. Med. Soc. London

The 1864 London & Provincial adds the information that John was a graduate of *Univ Coll*, which presumably means University College, London. Although John had given up his appointment as Medical Officer at Clapham General Dispensary, he maintained his practice in Clapham High Street, for Kelly's 1860 Post Office Directory for Outer London has the entry:

Tapson John, physician, High Street, Clapham

and the 1862 Post Office Directory for Surrey gives the address as *101 High St, Clapham*.

The 1861 census return for Clapham (PRO RG9/368 Fo. 298) lists John's complete family:

East Lodge, 15 Clapham Common

John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*44*	*General Practitioner of Medicine & Surgery M.D. M.R.C.S. & L.S.A.*	*Devon,*	*Tavistock*
Susannah Harriet Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*50*		*Surrey,*	*Camberwell*
William John Tapson	*Son*		*17*		*„*	*Clapham*
Francis Elizabeth Tapson	*Dau*		*15*		*„*	*„*
Marrion Tapson	*Dau*		*14*		*„*	*„*
Alice Tapson	*Dau*		*7*		*„*	*„*

together with three female servants (a *cook*, a *parlourmaid* and a *housemaid*).

Kelly's 1870 Post Office Directory for Surrey shows that the family had by then moved from Clapham, which is just south of the Thames opposite Westminster, a few miles south-east into the suburban district of Upper Norwood:

Tapson John M.D. Trehurst, Victoria rd, Up. Norwood

Upper Norwood is about six miles south of London Bridge, and it was here that the Crystal Palace, a huge edifice of glass and iron, had been opened in 1854; it was destroyed by fire in 1936. John's address is given more fully in the 1872 Post Office Directory for London, Southern Suburbs:

Tapson John, physician, Trehurst, Victoria road, Dulwich wood park, Upper Norwood S.E.

The family were at this address at the time of the 1871 census, except for William John, the only son of John and Susannah Harriet, who had left home; the return for the parish of St. Giles, Camberwell (PRO RG10/721 Fo. 29) makes it clear that John had already retired:

Victoria Road, Trehurst

John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*54*	*M.D. of Aberdeen not practising*	*Devon, Tavistock*
Susannah H. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*59*		*Surrey, Camberwell*
Frances E. Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*25*		*„ Clapham*
Marion Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*24*		*„ „*
Alice Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*17*	*Scholar*	*„ „*

together with two female *Domestic Servants*.

The 1874 Post Office Directory for Surrey gives the same address, but the following year Susannah Harriet died; her death was registered in 1875, Q2 (Brighton R.D.) and her age was given as 64. Susannah Harriet had probably gone to Brighton in the hope that the sea air would have helped her to regain her health. So it must have been soon after his wife's death that John decided on yet another move, this time to Blackheath, only a few miles east of Upper Norwood but in the county of Kent. Blackheath, with its common of 267 acres, is immediately south of Greenwich Park which was laid out by Le Nôtre under Charles II and contains the Greenwich Observatory. The new address is given in the 1876 Post Office Directory for London, Southern Suburbs:

Tapson John M.D., 12 St Germain's pl., Blackheath S.E.

and the same address is given for John in the 1878 Post Office Directory for Kent. The name comes as a surprise, because *St. Germains* (without the apostrophe) is the correct spelling (page 233) of the little Cornish town in which John grew up; whether this was a curious coincidence or whether John was the builder of *St Germain's Place* remains a mystery, though he did invest in property (page 245).

John's youngest daughter, Alice, died on 5 April 1879; she was 25 years old. Alice had not made a will, but Letters of Administration of her estate, dated 1 December 1905, show that she left £2985 - 13 - 4 gross. She died at *St German's Place, Blackheath, in the County of Kent,* but her address was recorded as *Trehurst, Victoria Road, Dulwich, in the County of Surrey*; so her father had retained his earlier home after moving to Blackheath. John did not take upon himself the administration of Alice's estate; after her father's death the Letters of Administration were granted to her brother, William John.

The 1880 Post Office Directory for London, Southern Suburbs, changes the spelling:

Tapson John M.D. Surgeon, 12 St Germans pl, Blackheath S.E.

as does the 1881 census return for Kidbrooke (PRO RG11/741 Fo. 69):

12 St Germans Place

John Tapson	*Head*	*Widr*	*64*	*Doctor of Medicine Aberdeen (Retired)*	*Devonshire, Tavistock*
Frances E. Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*35*		*Surrey, Clapham*
Marion Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*34*		*„ „*
Hannah Todman	*Serv*	*Un*	*52*	*Cook Domestic Serv*	*Hants, Berrington*
Annie Parkinson	*Serv*	*Un*	*21*	*Housemaid „ „*	*Kent, Charlton*

The address is unchanged in the Post Office Directories of 1882 for Kent and 1884 for London, Southern Suburbs.

A new address appears in Kelly's 1887 and 1890 directories for Kent:

Tapson J, 32 Vanbrugh pk, Blackheath

and the same address is given in Kelly's London, Southern Suburbs, directories of 1888, 1892 and 1894. It is also the address given in the 1891 census return for Greenwich (PRO RG12/512 Fo. 109):

32 Vanbrugh Park (The Cottage)

John Tapson	*Head*	*Widr*	*74*	*Medical Practitioner retired M.D. M.R.C.S.*	*Devon, Tavistock*
Frances E. Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*45*		*Surrey, Clapham*
Marion Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*44*		*„ „*
Eliza Romsey	*Serv*	*Un*	*27*	*Cook (Domestic Serv)*	*Suffolk, Nacton*
Harriett S.A. Master	*Serv*	*Un*	*21*	*Housemaid „ „*	*Middsex, Poplar* *

The Will of John Tapson dated 8 July 1895

I, John Tapson now residing at 32 Vanbrugh Park Blackheath ..... Kent M.D. ..... appoint my son William John Tapson of the London Stock Exchange and my two daughters Frances Elizabeth Tapson and Marion Tapson of 32 Vanbrugh Park aforesaid to be Executors of this my will I confirm the Settlement executed on my marriage and I declare that the provisions hereby made for my children are intended to be in addition to and not in satisfaction of those made ..... for them respectively in and by such Settlement I bequeath to my said two daughters ..... all my consumable stores jewels trinkets plate linen china glass books pictures prints furniture and household efects (except money or securities for money) which shall at the time of my death be in or about their said house No 32 Vanbrugh Park ..... I devise and bequeath all my real estate of every tenure and all my personal estate and effects ..... not otherwise disposed of by this my will ..... to the use of the said William John Tapson Frances Elizabeth Tapson and Marion Tapson ..... In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand this eighth day of July one thousand eight hundred and ninety five John Tapson

The will gives detailed instructions regarding John's *real and leasehold hereditaments and premises*, so he had clearly invested well in property. It seems from the wording of the will that he had already made over 32 Vanbrugh Park to his two surviving daughters. John died at Blackheath on 28 July 1905 leaving effects valued at £12,382 - 0 - 1; just five weeks later, on 2 September 1905, Frances Elizabeth died, also at Blackheath. Probate of John's will was granted to William John and Marion, the surviving executors, on 8 September 1905; Letters of Administration of the estate of his late sister Alice (page 244) were granted to William John on 1 December 1905. At the times of their deaths John was 88 years old and Frances Elizabeth 60.

The Will of Frances Elizabeth Tapson dated 18 June 1904

This is the Last Will and Testament of me Frances Elizabeth Tapson (Spinster) of The Cottage 32 Vanbrugh Park Blackheath in the county of Kent made this eighteenth day of June in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and four ..... I appoint William John Tapson & Marion Tapson to be my Executors ..... I give and bequeath unto my brother William John Tapson the income of the half of my personal property invested in Government securities & other stocks for his life & that of his wife Annie Tapson at their death the money absolutely to my niece Annie Helen Madeline Tapson The remaining half of the aforesaid personal property to my nephew Ernest John Tapson absolutely To my sister Marion Tapson my share i e. one half of "The Cottage" 32 Vanbrugh Park Blackheath Kent with my share of all contents therein To my niece Annie Helen Madeline Tapson my two plain gold bracelets and gold brooch with pink coral To my nephew Harold Percival Tapson my silver waiter To my grand nephew & godson Henry William Tapson my christening silver mug & silver knife spoon & fork To my kind friend & doctor Clarke K Morris Esq the sum of fifty pounds free of legacy duty taken from my balance in the London & County Bank a brooch or similar ornament to each of my cousins Evelyn Mary Tapson Grace Emma Tapson Stephana Crofts and Mary Crofts the rest residue & remainder of my estate and effects both real & personal to my sister Marion Tapson I further request my doctor in attendance to sever an artery or in some like manner ascertain that there is no possibility of my being buried alive of which I stand in great dread. Frances Elizabeth Tapson

* See Appendix VI (Addenda)

On 23 June 1905 Frances Elizabeth had added a codicil to her will leaving her share left to her by her father equally to William John and Marion, apart from £10 each to her servants Christiana Gibson and Mary Baker, and £20 each to the East London Hospital for Children and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Probate was granted to William John Tapson and Marion Tapson on 14 February 1906; the estate was valued at £10,070 - 15 - 8. Frances Elizabeth's will is valuable to us in that it provides corroborative evidence of family relationships: in particular, Stephana Crofts and Mary Crofts must have been daughters of Stephana Springett Crofts, a first cousin of John Tapson (page 257); Stephana Springett Tapson married William Crofts in 1844, so Stephana and Mary would have been about the same age as Frances Elizabeth. Marion died at Blackheath on 22 February 1908, aged nearly 61 years; her effects were valued at £11,070 - 3 - 5.

The Will of Marion Tapson dated 3 June 1907

I Marion Tapson of "The Cottage" 32 Vanbrugh Park Blackheath ..... Kent spinster ..... appoint my brother William John Tapson of 30 Queens Park Road Brighton Sussex and Henry Samuel Trigge of 58 Vanbrugh Park aforesaid solicitor Executors of this my will I desire if I die in England that I may be buried in the family grave in Norwood Cemetery I devise my freehold house No 32 Vanbrugh Park aforesaid for all my estate and interest therein to my said brother William John Tapson and his heirs and I also bequeath to him all furniture and effects of whatever description that may be in or about the said house at my death for his absolute use save and except articles which I otherwise bequeath ..... I bequeath ..... to The East London Hospital for Children Shadwell the sum of one hundred pounds to the Blackheath Cottage Hospital the sum of one hundred pounds to the Church of England Incorporated Society for providing Homes for Waifs and Strays the sum of one hundred pounds And to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign parts the sum of two hundred pounds ..... I bequeath ..... to my nephew Ernest John Tapson of Hazlemere Beauchamp Road Upper Norwood Surrey my plated spirit stand and decanters and cruet stand and to his son Charley Tapson my Bagatelle Board Balls and Cues Chess board and Ivory Chessmen Backgammon board and desk initialled "AT" to my niece Helen Blundy wife of James Blundy Church Missionary Society China care of the said William John Tapson my writing desk initialled "FET" to my cousin Evelyn Mary Tapson of 16 Bonneville Gardens Clapham Park Surrey spinster my diamond bangle bracelet and my diamond and emerald ring to my cousin Grace Emma Tapson of 16 Bonneville Gardens aforesaid spinster my diamond Bar safety brooch cluster diamond ring and dressing case to my cousin Ida Norton wife of Richard Norton of 25 Veronica Road Upper Tooting Surrey my red and gold Indian Dessert Service and my topaz and pearl brooch to my cousin Agnes Haselfoot wife of Robert Paske Haselfoot of "Kimberley" 173 Tulse Hill Surrey my red and gold tea and Coffee service and my small inscribed plated tea tray with handles to my cousin Frederic Ernest William Tapson of 92 Upper Tulse Hill Surrey my silver Fish slice and fork and my clock with Aneroid barometer to my cousin Stephana Mary Crofts of Bunwell House Cheltenham spinster my diamond and emerald brooch to my cousin Mary Crofts of Bunwell House aforesaid spinster my pearl "Basket" brooch and to Mabel Morris wife of Clarke Morris of Gordon Lodge Blackheath aforesaid my picture "Madonna" by Sasso Ferrato and Sir Walter Scotts Works in 41 volumes I bequeath the following pecuniary legacies videlicet to my nephew and godson Harold Percy Tapson the sum of seven hundred pounds to my niece the said Helen Blundy the sum of three hundred pounds to my nephew the said Ernest John Tapson the sum of three hundred pounds to my great nephew the said Charley Tapson the sum of one hundred pounds to my nephew Horace William Tapson the sum of one hundred pounds and to my cousin the said Evelyn Mary Tapson the sum of three hundred pounds to my cousin the said Grace Emma Tapson the sum of three hundred pounds to my cousin the said Ida Norton the sum of three hundred pounds and to his daughter Nora Norton the sum of one hundred pounds to my cousin the said Stephana Mary Crofts the sum of three hundred pounds to my cousin the said Mary Crofts the sum of three hundred pounds to my cousin the said Frederick Ernest William Tapson the sum of one hundred pounds to the said Clarke Morris the sum of five hundred pounds to each of my servants Christiana Gibson and Mary Baker ..... fifty pounds ..... I devise and bequeath all the ..... remainder of my estate ..... to my said brother William John Tapson ..... In Witness whereof I the said Marion Tapson have to this my will set my hand this third day of June one thousand nine hundred and seven *Marion Tapson*

7.18 WILLIAM JOHN TAPSON, CITY OF LONDON STOCKBROKER

The only son of John Tapson M.D. was married in the church of the Holy Trinity, Clapham (GLRO):

25 Jun 1867 ***William John Tapson*** *23 Bachelor Stockbroker Clapham*
(Father: John Tapson M.D.)
Jane Madeline Lawford *a minor Spinster Clapham*
(Father: William Lawford, Civil Engineer)
by licence in the presence of William Lawford & John Echalas Dawson

A year later the first child of William John and Jane Madeline was baptized at the same church:

24 Jun 1868 Arthur William son of William John Tapson & Jane Madeline of Clapham, Stockbroker Born 7 May 1868

The death of Arthur William was registered in 1869, Q2 (Croydon R.D.).

The births of two more sons were registered in the Croydon R.D.: Ernest John in 1870, Q1 and Francis Swinburne in 1871, Q1; Francis Swinburne was baptized at St. John, Penge:

*23 Mar 1871 Francis Swinburne son of William John Tapson & Jane Madeline**

Kelly's 1871 Post Office Directory for London gives William John's business address:

Tapson William John, Stockbroker, 8 Warnford Court, E.C.

Warnford Court is off Throgmorton Street, on which was sited the old London Stock Exchange building dating from 1854. His home address is given in Kelly's 1870 Post Office Directory for Surrey:

Tapson William, 10 Malcolm rd, Penge

Penge is only a short distance to the south-east of Upper Norwood, where William John's father was then living (page 244). William and his family were still living in Malcolm Road at the time of the 1871 census, when they were included in the return for Penge (PRO RG10/851 Fo. 15):

14 Malcolm Rd

William J. Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*27*	*Mem Lon Stk Exch*	*Surrey, Clapham*
Jane M. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*23*		*Middlesex, Hackney*
Ernest J. Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*1*		*Surrey, Penge*
Francis S. Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*2 mo.*		*„ „*
Elizabeth Skinner	*Serv*	*Wid*	*68*	*Nurse*	*„ Ewell*
Eliza Emary	*Serv*	*Un*	*21*	*Gen^{l} Serv^{t}*	*Kent, Chestfield*
Alice Yeates	*Serv*	*Un*	*21*	*Nurse*	*„ „*

The employment of two nurses is understandable, for the death of Francis Swinburne was registered in 1873, Q1, and that of William John's wife, Jane Madeline, in 1874, Q4, both in the Croydon R.D. Still only 27 years old, she must have been about 20 when she married William John.

William John wasted no time: his second marriage, to Annie French, was registered in 1875, Q2 (Lewisham R.D.). This marriage was soon followed by the births, all registered in the Croydon R.D., of Horace William in 1876, Q1; Annie Helen Madeline in 1878, Q1; and Thomas Herbert in 1880, Q3. Kelly's 1880 directory for London, Southern Suburbs, show that the family had moved to Croydon, a few miles south of Penge:

Tapson W. J. 7 St James pk, Croydon

William John is shown at this address with his new family in the 1881 census return for Croydon (PRO RG11/814 Fo. 108):

7 St James Park

William J. Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*37*	*Member of London Stock Exchange*	*Surrey, Clapham*
Annie Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*37*		*„ Newington*
Horace W. Tapson	*Son*		*5*		*„ Croydon*
Annie H. M. Tapson	*Dau*		*3*		*„ „*
Thomas H. Tapson	*Son*		*7 mo.*		*„ „*
Laura Davis	*Serv*	*Mar*	*19*	*General Servant*	*Leicester, Leicester*

*International Genealogical Index — not checked in parish register.

Ernest John, William John's only surviving child by his first marriage who was 4 years old when his mother died, had been sent to a small private boarding school at Broadwater, now part of Worthing, on the Sussex coast. Ernest John is listed as one of the pupils at the school in the 1881 census return for Broadwater (PRO RG11/1117 Fo. 16):

11 Park Crescent

Mary Oliver	*Head*	*Wid*	*60*	*School Mistress*	*Hants, Sawtry(?)*
Ernest J. Tapson	*Pupil*		*11*	*Pupil Scholar*	*Surrey, Penge*

together with two unmarried females each aged 33 and described as a *governess*, a male *tutor* aged 19, a *page boy* aged 15, and another nine *pupils*, all boys. The pupils in 1881 were in the 6 to 12 age-range, so it is possible that Ernest John had been there for some time.

The death of Thomas Herbert was registered in 1882, Q2 (Croydon R.D.). Also registered in the Croydon R.D. were the birth of Robert George in 1882, Q3 and his burial in the same quarter, and the birth of Stanley Lawford in 1884, Q2 and his burial in the same quarter. (Their birth certificates or baptismal entries would be needed to corroborate the assumption that these two boys were indeed the children of William John and Annie. It is strange that William John should have given one child of his second marriage the name Madeline, which was the second name of his first wife, and another child the name Lawford, which was the maiden name of his first wife.)

It was probably soon after the burial of Stanley Lawford that William John moved again, this time to Brockley in Kent, about two miles south-west of Blackheath, where he is listed in Kelly's 1884 and 1888 directories for London, Southern Suburbs, and in Kelly's 1887 directory for Kent:

Tapson Wm, 14 Sandbourne rd, Brockley, S.E.

William John's father was already living at Blackheath (page 244). Harold Percival, the youngest child of William John, was born at Brockley; the birth was registered in 1887, Q3 (Greenwich R.D.). The family had made yet another move by 1890, according to Kelly's directory of that year for Kent:•

Tapson W.J., 94 Howson rd, Brockley

And the 1899 directory for Kent gives:

Tapson William John, Farningham, Swanley Junction

The four surviving children of William John all married: Ernest John married Florence Lucy M. Benham in 1896, Q4 (Lambeth R.D.); the marriage of Horace William as registered in 1900, Q2 (Greenwich R.D.); Annie Helen Madeline married James Blundy; and Harold Percival married Ethel M. Dark in 1912, Q3 (Greenwich R.D.). Horace William's wife, Rose, left him and emigrated to New Zealand with their two children;* he died in 1939, Q1, aged 62 (Brighton R.D.).

<u>The Will of William John Tapson dated 24 June 1908</u>

This is my Last Will and Testament I, William John Tapson of 32 Vanbrugh Park Blackheath ..... appoint my sons Ernest John Tapson of "Haselmere" Beauchamp Road Upper Norwood ..... & Harold Percival Tapson of 32 Vanbrugh Park Blackheath ..... to be the Executors and trustees of this my will ..... I bequeath ..... To my grandson Charles Ernest Tapson five pounds To my grandaughter Elsie Nellie Tapson ten pounds To my grandson Henry William Tapson ten pounds To my daughter Annie Helen Madeline Blundy one thousand pounds to be paid to her after the death of my dear wife Annie Tapson in which she has a life interest I devise and bequeath all my real and personal estate not hereby otherwise disposed of unto my dear wife ..... & after her death as follows Half of the remainder I leave to my son Harold Percival Tapson & the residue to be equally divided between my children Ernest John Tapson Horace William Tapson Annie Helen Madeline Blundy and Harold Percival Tapson William John Tapson 24th June 1908

The will was witnessed by Christiana Gibson and Mary Baker, the servants mentioned in the wills of both Frances Elizabeth and Marion. Annie died before William John, in 1911, Q4. William John died at Blackheath on 13 September 1912; his estate was valued at £5,294 - 1 - 2.

*Information supplied by Mrs Joyce Button, a granddaughter of Ernest John Tapson

•See Appendix VI (Addenda) & Appendix VII (Further Addenda)

7.19 JOSEPH ALFRED TAPSON OF CLAPHAM, SURGEON

The LONDON & PROVINCIAL MEDICAL DIRECTORY has the entry both in 1855 and in 1860:

Tapson, Joseph Alfred, High Street, Clapham, Surrey
M.R.C.S. Eng. 1848; L.S.A. 1848; Surg. to Clapham Gen. Disp.

The 1864 directory has a similar entry, but provides the additional information that Joseph Alfred had graduated from Westminster College. Joseph Alfred had followed his eldest brother, John, into medicine and by 1855 both brothers held office at Clapham General Dispensary, where John was the Medical Officer (page 243).•

Joseph Alfred was married at the church of St. John the Evangelist, Brixton, Lambeth:

27 Apr 1854 ***Joseph Alfred Tapson*** *26 Bachelor Gentleman*
Clapham (Father: William Tapson, Gentleman)
Emma Elizabeth Lingham *25 Spinster*
North Brixton (Father: Thomas John Lingham, Gentleman)
by Licence in the presence of George Lingham & Jn° Tapson

The births of three of the first four children of Joseph Alfred and Emma Elizabeth were registered in Wandsworth R.D.: Evelyn Mary in 1855, Q2; Grace Emma in 1857, Q1; and Alfred Lingham in 1860, Q3. Alfred Lingham's death was registered in 1861, Q1 (Wandsworth R.D.). The 1861 census for Clapham (PRO RG9/368 Fo. 287) shows that Joseph Alfred and Emma Elizabeth had another daughter, Ida Josephine, also born in Clapham but whose birth seems not to have been registered:

6 High Street

Joseph Alfred Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*33*	*Surgeon in General Practice*	*Cornwall, St. Germans*
Emma Elizabeth Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*31*		*Surrey, St. George, Camberwell*
Evelyn Mary Tapson	*Dau*		*6*		*Surrey, Clapham*
Grace Emma Tapson	*Dau*		*4*		*„ „*
Ida Josephine Tapson	*Dau*		*2*		*„ „*

together with two female *house servants*.

Kelly's 1862 Post Office Directory for Surrey indicates a change of address:

Tapson J. A. esq, 83 High street, Clapham

This was to remain the family home for many years; it was the address given in all Kelly's directories for Surrey and for London, Southern Suburbs, up to and including that for 1888. The only variation was that Kelly's 1876 London, Southern Suburbs, directory, as well as giving the High Street address in the *Court* section, also gave, in the *Commercial* section:

Tapson & Dorin, Surgeons, 83 High street, Clapham & Clapham rd, S.W.

so it seems that Joseph Alfred and his partner operated a surgery from his home.

The births of another four children of Joseph Alfred and Emma Elizabeth were also registered in the Wandsworth R.D.: Agnes Emily in 1862, Q4; Herbert Francis in 1864, Q1; Frederick Ernest William in 1865, Q3; and Cecil Octavius in 1867, Q1. Two of these children were baptized in the church of St. Andrew, Lambeth:

*4 Feb 1864 Herbert Francis son of Joseph Alfred Tapson & Emma Elizabeth**
*20 Sep 1865 Frederick Ernest William son of Joseph Alfred Tapson & Emma Elizabeth**

Frederick Ernest William received a second baptism on the same day at the Stockwell Chapel of St. Mark, Kennington (GLRO):

20 Sep 1865 Frederick Ernest William son of Joseph Alfred & Emma Elizabeth Tapson, Clapham, Surgeon (born 21 August 1865)

On this occasion the ceremony was performed not by the incumbent but by the child's uncle Robert, who was at the time Curate-in-Charge of Camberwell (page 253).

*International Genealogical Index — not checked in parish register.

•See Appendix VI (Addenda).

The 1871 census return for Clapham (PRO RG10/698 Fo. 51) includes all the family:

83 High Street					
Joseph A. Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*43*	*Surgeon in General Practice*	*Cornwall, St. Germans*
Emma E. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*41*		*Surrey, Camberwell*
Evelyn M. Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*16*	*Scholar*	*„ Clapham*
Grace E. Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*14*	*Scholar*	*„ „*
Ida J. Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*12*	*Scholar*	*„ „*
Agnes E. Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*8*	*Scholar*	*„ „*
Herbert F. Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*7*	*Scholar*	*„ „*
Frederick E.W. Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*5*	*Scholar*	*„ „*
Cecil O. Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*4*	*Scholar*	*„ „*

together with two female servants (a *nurse* and a *housemaid*).

The 1881 census return for Clapham (PRO RG11/635 Fo. 74) shows little change, except that only the two youngest children were still described as scholars; Herbert Francis was a *clerk*. Also in the household were a young Irish surgeon and his wife, each described as a *visitor*, and three domestic servants. The stable family life of Joseph Alfred was, however, soon to change, as is evidenced by three events all registered in Wandsworth R.D.: his daughter Ida Josephine married Richard Edward Norton in 1882, Q3; his wife, Emma Elizabeth, died in 1885, Q1 at the age of 55; and his daughter Agnes Emily married Robert Edward Theophilus Paske Haselfoot in 1886, Q3.

The next significant event was the remarriage of Joseph Alfred himself in 1888, Q2 (Islington R.D.), his second wife being a widow, Mary Elizabeth Stapleton. Joseph Alfred moved into Mary Elizabeth's home, at the address given in Kelly's 1892 directory for London, Southern Suburbs:

Tapson Joseph Alfred M.R.C.S. Eng, L.R.C.P. Lond, Physician & Surgeon,
Holmwood, The Grove, Clapham Common

However, Joseph Alfred and his wife were not in residence there on the night of the 1891 census, because the return for Clapham (PRO RG12/444 Fo. 56) records only four domestic servants in the house (a *Lady's Maid*, a *Cook*, a *Parlourmaid* and a *Housemaid*), as well as a *Coachman* living with his wife and two daughters in *Holmwood Stables*.•

The Will of Joseph Alfred Tapson dated 10 August 1897

I Joseph Alfred Tapson of "Holmwood" Crescent Grove Clapham Common in the County of Surrey L R C P London and M R C S England ..... appoint my son Frederic Ernest William Tapson and my two sons in law Richard Edward Norton and Robert Edward Theophilus Paske Haselfoot to be the Executors of this my will I request my dear wife to select some piece or pieces of my jewellery in remembrance of me ..... and inasmuch as my said wife is otherwise well provided for I know I shall be carrying out her wishes in making no provision for her under this my will I bequeath to my daughters Evelyn Mary Tapson and Grace Emma Tapson the sums of five hundred pounds Watney and Company Limited B Mortgage Debenture stock five hundred pounds New South Wales Government Three per cent stock five hundred pounds New Zealand Government three per cent stock and three hundred and fifty pounds Indian Government three per cent stock equally to be divided between them ..... And I also bequeath to my same two daughters ..... all my furniture including Carpets Curtains Linen China glass pictures prints and engravings also all wines and consumable stores ..... And as to all my real and personal property (including my jewellery plate Books manuscripts and personal belongings)..... I give devise and bequeath the same unto my executors upon trust that they ..... shall divide the same between my seven children namely Evelyn Mary Tapson Grace Emma Tapson Ida Josephine Norton Agnes Emily Haselfoot Herbert Francis Tapson Frederic Ernest William Tapson and Cecil Octavius Tapson share and share alike except that each of them ..... Herbert Francis Tapson and Cecil Octavius Tapson shall receive the sum of one hundred pounds less than the sum which any of the other of my said children shall receive ..... In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand this tenth day of August one thousand eight hundred and ninety seven *Joseph Alfred Tapson*

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

Joseph Alfred died at Holmwood on 3 March 1911 at the age of 83. Probate was granted on 24 March 1911 to Frederick Ernest William Tapson, bank clerk, Richard Edward Norton, accountant, and Robert Edward Theophilus Paske Haselfoot Esq, effects being valued at £3,686 - 1 - 4. His second wife, Mary Elizabeth, died at Holmwood on 19 September 1918; her age was given as 86. Her will, dated 23 November 1915, was followed by eleven codicils, a total of fifteen pages of typescript. She named as *Executors and Trustees* her three nephews, Noel Percival Richard Preeston, Philip Southwell Preeston and Ralph Septimus Preeston, and Hedley Faithfull Norris, Solicitor. Apart from generous legacies to servants and former servants and to charitable organizations, the bulk of her considerable estate was left to her three nephews and to her four nieces, Caroline Stapleton Preeston, Olive Haygarth Cobbold, Phyllis Mary Gilling and Madeline Hartley Preeston.

Mary Elizabeth left large quantities of silver, pictures, jewellery and furs. Apparently Holmwood had belonged to her (rather than to Joseph Alfred) as did six other freehold properties. The will names her late father Richard Hartley, her late husband Thomas Wesney Stapleton and her late husband William Johnson, so Joseph Alfred had been her third husband. Perhaps the most interesting section of her will is that dealing with her wishes concerning her funeral arrangements:

> *I desire my body to be cremated at the Golders Green Crematorium and my ashes placed in the same Vault with the remains of my former husbands and my deceased child at Kensal Green Cemetery in the said County of London and I direct that my funeral shall be of the plainest description consistent with decency and that no plumes or other useless emblems be employed on the occasion and that no scarves hat bands or gloves be given to the mourners and that with the exception of my own carriage no carriage shall follow my remains at my funeral And further I desire that no inscription shall be placed upon my grave or grave head stone other than the words "Mary Elizabeth Tapson" with the date of my death written above or below such name and that no announcement shall be made in any public paper of my death*

Probate of the will was granted to Hedley Faithfull Norris on 28 November 1918; the estate was valued at £46,261 - 6 - 7, but resworn by Noel Percival Richard Preeston, Colonel in H.M. Army, on 22 January 1919 as £46,376 - 6 - 7.

The Will of Grace Emma Tapson dated 22 March 1904

I Grace Emma Tapson of 16, Bonneville Gardens, Clapham Common ..... declare this to be my last Will whereof I appoint Evelyn Mary Tapson of 16, Bonneville Gardens Clapham Common and Frederick Ernest William Tapson of 9, Cotherstone Rd. Christchurch Rd., Streatham Surrey to be the Executors ..... I give and bequeath to my sister Evelyn Mary Tapson the whole of my personal property, with the exception of twenty five pounds to be paid to my brother Frederick Ernest William Tapson and I wish that my sister Evelyn Mary Tapson should divide & apportion to the members of the family, & any friend that she knows I would wish to be remembered, such money and personal belongings, as she would know to be in accordance with my wishes. Witness my hand this twenty second day of March 1904 *Grace Emma Tapson*

This will makes it clear that the two eldest daughters of Joseph Alfred did not marry, because when it was written in 1904 Grace Emma and Evelyn Mary were sharing a home in Clapham. Their cousin *Marion Tapson Spinster 32 Vanbrugh Park Blackheath S.E.*, a daughter of John Tapson (page 243), was one of the witnesses to the will. In her own will, written three years later (page 246), Marion made very generous bequests to Evelyn Mary, Grace Emma, Ida Norton, Agnes Haselfoot and Frederic Ernest William; so the cousins, children of John and of Joseph Alfred who had grown up together in Clapham, had remained close friends. Marion also made bequests to two rather more distant cousins on the Tapson side, the children of Stephana Springett Crofts.

Grace Emma was 64 years old when she died on 28 June 1921 at 38 Kingsland Road, Broadwater, Sussex, the watering place on the south coast where her second cousin Ernest John was at school at the time of the 1881 census (page 248). Probate of Grace Emma's will was granted on 18 August 1921 to Frederic Ernest William Tapson; her estate was valued at £347 - 5 - 5.

Evelyn Mary had moved with Grace Emma from Clapham to Broadwater, and it was from their shared home there that Evelyn Mary made her will a few weeks after her sister's death:

The Will of Evelyn Mary Tapson dated 4 August 1921

This is the last Will and Testament of me Evelyn Mary Tapson of 38 Kingsland Road Broadwater Nr Worthing in the County of Sussex made this fourth day of August in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and twenty one ..... I appoint Frederic Ernest William Tapson of Down View Summerdown Rd. Eastbourne and Agnes Emily Paske-Haselfoot 21 Lewes Crescent Brighton to be my Executors ..... I give and bequeath ..... To my cousin Edith Emily Lingham the sum of one hundred pounds to my sister Ida Josephine Norton my sister Agnes Emily Paske-Haselfoot and my brother Frederic Ernest William Tapson the sum of twenty five pounds each the remainder of my property to be equally divided between my nephews Ernest Lingham Norton and Frank Steer Norton and my nieces Nora Clare Norton Elsie Cleere Cave and Ivy Paske-Haselfoot Signed by the said Testator
Evelyn Mary Tapson

Evelyn Mary died on 6 April 1935 at 2 Eaton Place, Kings Cliff, Brighton, at the age of 80, though her home at the time was 21 Lewes Crescent, Brighton. Probate of her will was granted at Lewes on 18 May 1935 to Frederic Ernest William Tapson, *retired bank official*, her estate being valued at £2,149 - 8 - 0.

Joseph Alfred had sent his three sons to Dulwich College, the independent school about four miles from their home. An alumni publication, *Dulwich College Register 1619 - 1926*, gives details of their careers, from which it becomes clear why Frederic Ernest William Tapson was the only one of Joseph Alfred's three surviving sons to be named as an executor in his father's will and in the wills of his sisters Grace Emma and Evelyn Mary, and the only one to whom a bequest was made in the will of his cousin Marion; for his two brothers had emigrated, Herbert Francis to Australia and Cecil Octavius to the America:

9 Sep 1873
1131 TAPSON Herbert Francis, born 13 Dec 1863; son of —, Joseph Alfred, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., L.S.A., Holmwood, Crescent Grove, Clapham Common; brother of 1519 and 1580;
Third XV 1878-9-80; left Dec 1880; Upper Fifth;
Edward Boustead & Co., 27 Leadenhall St., East Indian merchants, 1880;
New South Wales sheep farming, 1885; Queensland 1887-1917; N.S.W and Victoria;
Man., Mr Falkiner's thoroughbred horsebreeding establishment in the Goulburn Valley;
married 22 Oct 1914, Minnie, daughter of William John Hobbs of Geelong, Victoria, merchant;
Address: 4 Eden Mansions, Dalgety St., St. Kilda, Victoria, Australia.

24 Jan 1876
1519 TAPSON Frederick Ernest William, born 21 Aug 1865; brother of 1131 and 1580;
left July 1881; Upper Fourth;
J.M. Holworthy & Co., London, Australian merchants, 1881;
Melhuish Sons & Co., merchants and insurance brokers, 1885;
Cox & Co., Army Agents, 1887-1916;
Pte., 1st Surrey V. R. 1884; Lt., 2nd S. Middx. V. R. 1889; 4th V. Bn. E. Surrey Regt. 1900-3;
married 10 Sep 1901, Frances Amelia, daughter of Sidney Wallis, the Radius, King's Road, Clapham Park;
Address: Down View, Summerdown Rd., Eastbourne.•

26 Apr 1876
1580 TAPSON Cecil Octavius, born 31 Dec 1866; brother of 1131 and 1519;
left July 1881; Upper Third;
California, ranching 15 years; owner of a cinnabar mine some years;
Secretary to an estate in Santa Barbara 1913;
Address: P.O. box 687, Santa Barbara, Cal., U.S.A.

•See Appendix VI (Addenda).

7.20 ROBERT TAPSON, CLERK IN HOLY ORDERS

The 1861 census return for Clapham (PRO RG9/368 Fo. 111) shows that Robert, the youngest son of William Tapson of St. Germans, had joined his brothers John and Joseph Alfred in that London suburb:

1 Turret Place

Ann Tupman	*Head*	*Wid*	*56*	*Boarding House Keeper*	*Leicestershire, Boro' of*
Robert Tapson	*Lodger*	*Un*	*31*	*Curate of St John's Church*	*Cornwall, St. Germans*

A year later Robert was married in the church of the Holy Trinity, Clapham (GLRO):

29 May 1862 ***Robert Tapson*** *Bachelor* *Clerk in Holy Orders* *Clapham*
(Father: William Tapson, Gentleman)
Emily Christiana Cox *Spinster* *Clapham*
(Father: Henry Cox, Lt. Colonel R.M.)
by licence in the presence of Christiana Cox, Frances Elizth Tapson & John Van Voorst

Frances Elizabeth Tapson was the 16 year old daughter of John Tapson (page 243) and Christiana Cox was the younger sister of the bride (see below).

Robert's name appears in the *Alumni Oxonienses*:

Tapson Robert Fifth son William of St Germans, Cornwall, Gent.
New Inn Hall, matric 6 April 1865, aged 35 years; held various curacies 1857-70.
Vicar of St Luke, South Lyncombe, 1871.

He is also listed in Crockford's Clerical Directory; that for 1907 reads:

Tapson Robert, Milton House, Weston-super-mare
Kings College, London, 1855; New Inn Hall, Oxford, 1865.
Deacon 1857; priest 1858, Peterborough.
Chaplain to Royal West of England Sanatorium, Weston-super-Mare, 1905.
Formerly curate of St. Giles, Northampton, 1857-59; St. Jude, Kings Cross, 1859;
St. John, Clapham, 1860-62; Curate-in-charge of Camberwell, 1862-67;
Curate of Christ Church, Brighton, 1869-70;
Vicar of St. Luke, S. Lyncombe, Bath, 1871-88; vicar of All Souls, Sidmouth, 1891-95.

It was whilst he was Curate-in-Charge of Camberwell that Robert baptized his nephew Frederick Ernest William (page 249); and he had been vicar of St. Luke, South Lyncombe, for ten years at the time of the 1881 census for that parish (PRO RG11/2435 Fo. 35):

St Lukes Vicarage

Robert Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*57*	*Vicar of St Luke*	*Cornwall, St. Germans*
Emily C. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*52*		*Woolwich*
Christiana Cox	*Sister in law*	*Un*	*51*		*Woolwich*
Hannah Humphrey	*Serv*	*Un*	*45*	*Servant Domestic*	*London, Hampton Wick*
Mary E. Collins	*Serv*	*Un*	*20*	*„ „*	*Wilts, Westbury*

Robert's sister-in-law, Christiana Cox, was one of the witnesses at his wedding.

The 1890 Crockford and Kelly's 1890 directory for Kent both give Robert's address as *15 Lansdowne Road, Tonbridge Wells*; this was during the period between his two incumbencies, at South Lyncombe and at Sidmouth. Kelly's 1893 directory for Devonshire lists, in the *Court* section:

Tapson Rev Robt A. K. C. Lond, Sidmouth

Robert would have attained his 66th birthday in 1895, and it appears that he retired from active ministry when he resigned the incumbency of Sidmouth in that year; when his sister, Emma, made her will in June 1896 (page 240) he was described as *at present without a fixed address*, but he was living in Somerset when he made his own will three years later:•

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

The Will of Robert Tapson dated 2 October 1899

I Robert Tapson of Clevedon in the County of Somerset Clerk in Holy Orders ..... bequeath all my property ..... unto my dear Wife absolutely and I appoint her sole Executrix of this my Will As witness my hand this second day of October One thousand eight hundred and ninety nine *Robert Tapson*

I the above named Robert Tapson declare this to be a Codicil to my Will above written In the event of my surviving my Wife I give all my property of every description to her sister Christiana Cox and appoint her sole Executrix In all other respects I confirm my said Will Dated second October 1899 *Robert Tapson*

Robert would have been about 76 years old when he was offered the Sanatorium chaplaincy at Weston-super-Mare, which is less than 10 miles from Clevedon, in 1905. And he was 80 when he died at Weston-super-Mare on 6 August 1909. His effects were valued at £1,389 - 16 - 4 when probate was granted on 26 August 1909 to his widow, who made a new will on the same day:

The Will of Emily Christiana Tapson dated 26 August 1909

I Emily Christiana Tapson of Milton House Weston super Mare ..... Somerset Widow ..... declare this to be my last Will and Testament 1. Inasmuch as all the money which I can dispose of ..... came to me and my sister from our Father his Brother and Nephew and large legacies left to my husband and me by parishioners of his and inasmuch as I had left by my Will all of which I was possessed to my Husband who has predeceased me and both my Sister and I were aware of his intention to leave practically the whole of that of which he would be possessed at our death to various charitable societies I consider it to be my duty and pleasure to divide my possessions in the following manner 2. I appoint Frederick Ernest William Tapson of 92 Upper Tulse Hill London S.W. Gentleman and Elisa Farrant Horman-Fisher of Weston super Mare Widow ..... to be the Executors of this my Will and I give to them the sum of Two hundred pounds each free of legacy duty for their trouble in acting as such Executors. 3. I give and bequeath to the Trustees of my settled property namely The Reverend Thomas Thompson Griffith ..... The Reverend William Laporte Payne ..... The Reverend Alfred H. Locock ..... Joseph Alfred Tapson Esquire M. D. of Holmwood Clapham Common and the said Frederick Ernest William Tapson Two hundred pounds each free of duty and beg them to accept the same as a mark of my gratitude to them for their acceptance of the office. 4. I give and bequeath to the said Frederick Ernest William Tapson One thousand pounds free of legacy duty, also all my furniture plate (except as that in the next clause mentioned) plated goods linen china musical instruments pictures articles of vertu and all other articles of personal domestic or household use or ornament ..... 5. I give and bequeath the one large and two smaller silver salvers and silver epergne presented by the Honourable Artillery Company to my late Uncle Charles Edward Cox Esquire for forty years Lieutenant Colonel of the said Company to his Grand Nephew Robert Nesham Esquire ..... I give and bequeath to each of my four Godchildren free of duty Two hundred pounds ..... [the four are named] *6. I give and bequeath free of duty .....* [5 bequests listed] *7. I bequeath the following charitable legacies in Memory of my late dear husband The Reverend Robert Tapson .....* [10 charities listed] *8. I bequeath the following charitable legacies in Memory of my late dear Sister Christiana Cox .....* [4 charities listed] *9. I also bequeath the following charitable legacies .....* [11 charities listed] ..... *11. I give to my old family servant Hannah Humphreys of Weston super Mare aforesaid an Annuity of Forty pounds for her life ..... 12. I bequeath to my faithful servant Mary Evans ..... the sum of Two hundred pounds ..... 13. I bequeath to ..... my Cook Mrs Lucy Noyce and to my Housemaid Adelaide Stansell a sum equal to two years wages ..... In Witness whereof I have ..... set my hand this twenty sixth day of August One thousand nine hundred and nine* *Emily C. Tapson*

On 18 September 1912 Emily Christiana added a codicil to her will because *in consequence of the great depreciation in the price of Consols and the increase in Death Duties I find it necessary to reduce some of the legacies given in my said will.* She died at Weston-super-Mare on 6 November 1914; her age was given as 88. Probate of Emily Christiana's will was granted on 15 December 1914; her effects were valued at £11,040 - 10 - 9.

7.21 JOSEPH TAPSON OF SOUTHWARK, WINE MERCHANT

Joseph, the youngest surviving son of John and Grace Tapson of St. Germans, was married and living in London by the time he was 24 years old, as the following baptism at the church of St. Mary, Newington (recorded in the bishop's transcripts, GLRO) confirms:

16 Sep 1814 Robert Springett son of Joseph and Stephana Tapson, Arnold Place, Merchant (born 6 Jul 1814).

Joseph had married Stephana Springett, whose brother Richard was the father of Robert Springett, one of the witnesses at the wedding in 1842 of John Tapson (page 243); this is confirmed by Joseph's will and by other evidence presented in this section. Newington, then in Surrey, is south of the Thames within the borough of Southwark and close to the Elephant and Castle. The child was buried at St. Mary, Newington (GLRO):

9 Mar 1816 Robert Springett Tapson St George's Boro' 20 months

By the time their next children were baptized Joseph and Stephana had moved to the New Kent Road, which runs eastwards from the Elephant and Castle to join the Old Kent Road. The following baptisms were recorded at St. George the Martyr, Southwark (GLRO); this church, to the north of Newington, is in Borough High Street opposite Borough underground station:

20 Feb 1818 Stephana Springett dau of Joseph & Stephana Tapson, Kent Road, Merchant (born 29 Aug 1816)

20 Feb 1818 James son of Joseph & Stephana Tapson, Kent Road, Merchant (born 12 Nov 1817)

1 Sep 1819 Alfred Joseph son of Joseph & Stephana Tapson, New Kent Road, Merchant (born 6 Aug 1819)

7 Aug 1822 William Henry son of Joseph & Stephana Tapson, Bengall Place, Kent Road, Merchant (born 11 Dec 1820)

16 May 1823 Anna dau of Joseph & Stephana Tapson, Bengall Place, Kent Road, Wine Merchant (born 16 Apr 1823)

9 Jan 1828 Anne dau of Joseph & Stephana Tapson, New Kent Road, Merchant (born 16 Apr 1823)

15 Feb 1832 Margaret Elizabeth dau of Joseph & Stephaney Tapson, Bengal Place, New Kent Road, Wine Merchant (born 25 Dec 1831)

It would appear that Anna was baptized a second time; presumably her parents had forgotten about the earlier baptism.

Although Joseph was living in Southwark whilst his brother William had remained in St. Germans, the similarities in the names which they gave to their children suggest that they kept in close contact: each named a son William Henry, the names James and Robert appear in both families, and the name Alfred Joseph in one family appears as Joseph Alfred in the other.

<u>The Will of Joseph Tapson dated 1 June 1827</u>

This is the last Will and Testament of me Joseph Tapson of Coleman Street in the City of London Merchant I give and bequeath unto my dear wife Stephana Tapson the Sum of one hundred pounds ..... I give and bequeath unto my Son James Tapson my gold watch I also give unto my said wife absolutely all my wearing apparel trinkets jewels and ornaments of the person and also all my household Goods and Furniture Plate Linen China Books Prints Pictures Wines Liquors and other household effects and household Stores of every descripton ..... All the Rest Residue and Remainder of my personal Estate and Effects ..... I give and bequeath the same unto my Brother John Tapson Purser of His Majesty's Navy and to my Brother-in-law Richard Springett of Goudhurst in the County of Kent my Executors ..... Upon Trust that they ..... convert into money all the said Estate and Effects ..... and out of the monies to be received ..... pay and discharge my just debts and funeral Expenses ..... and invest the residue ..... in the names ..... of my said above named trustees ..... in or upon the public Stocks or Funds of Great Britain or at Interest upon Government or real Security ..... Upon Trust to

..... empower my said wife to receive and take the interest dividends and annual proceeds ..... so long as she continue my widow ..... and from and after her decease or her marrying again ..... to stand possessed of the several Stocks Funds and Securities aforesaid In Trust for all and every my Children living at or born in due time after my decease who being a Son or Sons shall live to attain the age or ages of twenty one years or die under that age leaving lawful Issue ..... or being a daughter or daughters shall attain that age or be married / if more than one equally share and share alike ..... Provided always ..... that my said Wife shall and do during the continuance of such her widowhood and the respective minorities of my Children ..... out of the Interest or dividends and annual proceeds to which she my said wife will be entitled ..... maintain and educate my said Children in a proper manner and according to their fortunes and expectations in life but ..... it is my meaning ..... that the mode of such maintenance and education shall be solely in the discretion of my said wife ..... In Witness whereof I the said Joseph Tapson have to this my last Will and Testament ..... set my hand and affixed my Seal ..... this first day of June one thousand eight hundred and twenty seven *Joseph Tapson*

Coleman Street, off Gresham Street in the city of London and very close to both the Bank of England and the Guildhall, would seem to have been the address of Joseph's business. His extremely long will was proved at London in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury on 14 February 1832 (PRO PROB11/1796) *by the Oath of Richard Springett Esquire*. Richard Springett's sons, Robert and William John, both became pupils at University College School from 1833, three years after its foundation. Their entries in the list of U.C.S. alumni* read:

1833-36 SPRINGETT Rev Robert A.K.C. Late Vicar of Brafferton, Yorks, Died 1876
1833-36 SPRINGETT Rev William John M.A., Wadham Coll. Oxf., Vicar of Dunkirk, Faversham, Kent

They are also listed in the first issue of Crockford's Clerical Directory published in 1858:

Springett, Robert, Longstock, Stockbridge, Hants. — King's Coll. Lond, Theol. Assoc. 1853; Deacon 1853, Priest 1854, both by Bishop of Winchester; Curate of Longstock.
Springett, William John, Dunkirk Parsonage, Feversham, Kent — Wadham College Oxon., M.A. 1848; Deacon 1846, Priest 1847; P.C. of Christ Church, Dunkirk, Diocese of Cantab 1854 (Patron, Archbishop of Cantab; P.C's gross income £113 and House; Pop. 685.)

William John is also included in the *Alumni Oxonienses*:

Springett, William John, 2s. Richard of Goudhurst, Kent, gent. Wadham College matric 13 April 1842, aged 18; B.A. 1846, M.A. 1848, vicar of Dunkirk, Kent, 1854.

Joseph's sons Alfred Joseph and William Henry were also sent to University College School in 1833, the year after Joseph's will was proved; this was no doubt at the suggestion of their uncle, Richard Springett, one of the executors of the will and a trustee. The entry for Alfred Joseph in the list of U.C.S. alumni appears later (page 259); that for William Henry reads:

1833-36 TAPSON William Henry. Died at Peterhouse, Camb., of which he was a Scholar. Cousin to Rev. W. J. Springett [q.v.], and related to the late Robert Tapson

(see page 353). An entry in the *Alumni Cantabrigienses* provides more information:

Tapson, William Henry. Admitted pensioner at Peterhouse July 1, 1840. Of London (son of Mrs Tapson of 30, Great Coram Street, Brunswick Square) Matriculated Michaelmas 1840 Died Jan 15, 1842 in College of typhus fever, aged 21

Stephana must have moved to Great Coram Street, which is in Bloomsbury, after her husband's death. Kelly's 1841 Post Office Court Directory for London lists:

Tapson Mrs, 30 Gt Coram st, Brunswk sq

However, at the time of the 1841 census Stephana was in Stoke Damerel (PRO HO107/275/1 Fo. 6):

Paradise Row			
Stephana Tapson	*50-54*	*Independent means*	*Not born in Devonshire*
Stephana Tapson	*20-24*		*" " " "*
Will Tapson	*20-24*		*" " " "*
Ann Tapson	*15-19*		*" " " "*
Margaret Tapson	*9*		*Born in Devonshire*

*University College School Register 1831-1891 H. Walton Lawrence

Stephana would have been 24, William 20, Anna 18 and Margaret 9. The census was held on 6/7 June, so William was presumably on vacation from Cambridge, unless the family had moved to Devonshire for health reasons: William's death occurred seven months later and he may already have been showing signs of sickness; and his mother died only five months after the census. She was buried at the church of Charles the Martyr, Plymouth:

17 Nov 1841 Stephana Tapson Eldad 52

Stephana Springett Tapson, the eldest daughter of Joseph and Stephana, married William Crofts in 1844, Q3 (Tonbridge R.D.). At the time of the 1851 census William and Stephana were living at Hampstead in the parish of St. John (PRO HO107/1492 Fo. 201):

Lower Terrace

William Crofts	*Head*	*Mar*	*45*	*Barrister Chancery in Practice*	*York, North Grimston*
Stephana S. Crofts	*Wife*	*Mar*	*34*		*Surrey, St. Georges*
William C. Crofts	*Son*		*5*		*Midd'sex, Hampstead*
Stephana Crofts	*Dau*		*3*		*„ „*
Dorothea Crofts	*Dau*		*2*		*„ „*
Henry C. Crofts	*Son*		*1*		*„ „*
Mary Feast	*Serv*	*Un*	*25*	*Cook*	*Herts, Albury*
Caroline Dray	*Serv*	*Un*	*27*	*Nurse*	*Sussex, Heathfield*
Jane Dyke	*Serv*	*Un*	*21*	*Housemaid*	*Somerset, ?*
Sarah Springett	*Visitor*	*Un*	*69*	*Fundholder Annuitant*	*Kent, Goudhurst*
Anna Springett	*„*	*Un*	*56*	*„ „*	*„ „*
Margaret A. Tapson	*„*	*Un*	*19*	*„ „*	*Surrey, St Georges*

Sarah and Anna Springett may well have been aunts of Stephana, sisters of Richard Springett.

Margaret Elizabeth Tapson, Stephana's youngest sister who was visiting her in 1851, married Michael George Glazebrook in 1852, Q2; the marriage was registered in the Hampstead R.D. Anna Tapson did not marry; in 1881 she was living in Torquay, Devon, as is shown by the census return for Tormoham, the parish of the mother church of Torquay (PRO RG11/2168 Fo. 9):

Quintella

Mary Ann Hunt?	*Head*	*Wid*	*75?*	*Annuitant*	*Portugal, ?*
.....					
Anna Tapson	*Visitor*	*Un*	*57*		*Middlesex, London*

Anna was still living at Quintella when she made her will:

The Will of Anna Tapson dated 5 June 1883

This is the last Will and Testament of me Anna Tapson (Spinster) now residing at "Quintella" Torquay in the County of Devon I give all my property of whatever nature or kind to my sisters Stephana Springett Crofts and Margaret Elizabeth Glazebrook in equal shares as tenants in common and appoint them Executrixes of this my will In witness whereof I the said Anna Tapson have to this my will set my hand this fifth day of June one thousand eight hundred and eighty three Anna Tapson

The witnesses to the will were *Edith Tapson, 36 Gloucester Gardens, London, Spr* (a daughter of Alfred Joseph) and *Mary Elizabeth Crofts, 20 Kimbolton Rd. Bedford, Spinster*. Anna died on 26 May 1891 at Kensington; she was 68 years old. Probate was granted on 14 July 1891 to *Stephana Springett Crofts Widow the surviving Executor*; Anna's effects were valued at £375 - 9 - 7.

Stephana Crofts and Mary Crofts, who were mentioned in the wills (pages 245, 246) of Frances Elizabeth Tapson and Marion Tapson, daughters of John Tapson M.D., were daughters of Stephana Springett Crofts and her husband, William; they would have been about the same age as Frances Elizabeth (born 1845) and Marion (born 1847). So the two branches of the family clearly kept in touch with each other — Stephana Springett Crofts and John Tapson M.D. were first cousins.

7.22 JAMES TAPSON, FARMER

It is perhaps just a coincidence that the nurse employed at the time of the 1851 census by William and Stephana Crofts (page 257) was born at Heathfield in East Sussex, where Stephana's brother James was married in the parish church a few months before the census:

12 Nov 1850 ***James Tapson:*** *21 Bachelor Farmer Heathfield*
(Father: Joseph Tapson, Merchant)
Elizabeth Baker *21 Spinster Waldron*
(Father: John Baker, Farmer)
by Licence in the presence of John Baker, Stephana S Crofts, D. Hyland, Bloy H....?, J. Baker & Alfred J. Tapson

However, the suspicion remains that the Springetts of Goudhurst, in Kent, may have had some earlier association with Heathfield. (The ages given are awry, since James was married on his 33rd birthday.)

James and his wife appear in the 1851 census return (PRO HO107/1638 Fo. 399) for Heathfield, together with two female *house servants* and two male *agricultural labourers*:

Newick

James Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*34*	*Farmer of 320 Acres employing 14 labourers*	*Surrey, Walworth*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*32*		*Sussex, Heathfield*

James would have been 33 at the time of the census. Although Walworth, which he gave as his place of birth, is in the parish of St. Mary, Newington, where his brother Robert Springett Tapson had been baptized, James was baptized in the neighbouring parish of St. George the Martyr, Southwark, which his sisters Stephana Springett Crofts and Mary Elizabeth Tapson gave in the 1851 census as their birthplace (page 257).

In the 1841 census the head of the family at Newick farm had been a Sarah Baker; she was in the 55-59 age-band, and apparently a widow. Her eldest son, John, described as a farmer, was in the 20-24 age-band, as was Sarah's elder daughter, Elizabeth. This Elizabeth would seem to have been James's bride in 1850.

Heathfield lies in the registrar's district of Hailsham, where the births were registered of James Alfred in 1851, Q4, and of a female child in 1852, Q4; the death of the unnamed female child was registered in the same quarter.

The 1861 census for Heathfield (PRO RG9/569) shows a George E. Elliott and his family at Newick. His age is given as 34 and his occupation as *Farm Bailiff, Over 150 Acres of Land employing 4 men & 3 boys*. This is only half the acreage and half the number of employees as given for Newick in the 1851 census. It seems possible that he was employed as a farm manager by James, who is now found farming about 15 miles north-east of Heathfield, at Goudhurst near Cranbrook in Kent, the home parish of Richard Springett (PRO RG9/508 Fo. 62):

Horden

James Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*44*	*Farmer 268 Acres employing 11 men & 2 boys*	*London*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*43*		*Sussex, Heathfield*
James A. Tapson	*Son*		*9*		*" "*
William H. Tapson	*Son*		*4*		*Kent, Goudhurst*
Joseph A. Tapson	*Son*		*3*		*" "*
Kate Waghorn	*Serv*	*Un*	*15*	*Nurse Maid*	*" "*
Eliza Bartup?	*Serv*	*Un*	*17*	*General Servant*	*Sussex, Wadhurst*

The births had been registered (Cranbrook R.D.) of William Henry in 1856, Q4, and of Albert Joseph in 1858, Q1. A further birth was registered in the Cranbrook R.D. in 1862, Q2, that of Mary Elizabeth, presumably another daughter of James and Elizabeth. After that nothing more is heard of the family: they were not at Horden in 1871, and it is possible that they emigrated.*

*See Appendix VI (Addenda).

7.23 ALFRED JOSEPH TAPSON M.B. OF PADDINGTON, SURGEON & G.P.

As mentioned earlier (page 256), Alfred Joseph was educated at University College School. The list of U.C.S. alumni* has the entry:

1833-35 TAPSON Alfred Joseph M.B. Vice Pres., Obstetr. Soc., 36 Gloucester Gds W

And the LONDON & PROVINCIAL MEDICAL DIRECTORY for 1855 gives details of his qualifications:

Tapson, Alfred Joseph, 35 Gloucester Gardens, Westbourne Terrace, London
M.B. Lond. 1843; L.S.A. 1844 •

By the time of the 1851 census return for Paddington (PRO HO107/1466 Fo. 383) Alfred Joseph was already married with four young daughters:

35 Gloucester Gardens

Alfred Joseph Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*31*	*M.B. London, L.A.C. London General Practitioner*	*Surrey, Newington*
Anne E. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*31*		*Kent, Goudhurst*
Grace Eliz. Tapson	*Dau*		*5*		*M'sex, Paddington*
Annie Tapson	*Dau*		*3*		*" "*
Stephana M. Tapson	*Dau*		*2*		*" "*
Emily Tapson	*Dau*		*1*		*" "*
Eliz. Jane Honkwaite(?)	*Visitor*	*Un*	*40*		*Kent, Maidstone*
Mary Ann Lefrett(?)	*Serv*	*Un*	*27(?)*	*Cook*	*Essex, Woodham*
Mary Ann Thomas	*Serv*	*Un*	*19*	*Housemaid*	*Kent, Goudhurst*
Isabella Edwards	*Serv*	*Un*	*27*	*Nurse*	*Essex, Ingatestone*
Sarah Higgs	*Serv*	*Un*	*16*	*Under Nurse*	*Kent, Cranbrook*

Continuing association of this branch of the Tapson family with the Kent village of Goudhurst, the home of the Springett family, is illustrated by the fact that Alfred Joseph's wife was born there, as was his housemaid. Goudhurst is close to, and in the registrar's district of, Cranbrook, the birthplace of the under nurse; Cranbrook is half-way between Maidstone and Hastings. Alfred Joseph's marriage had been registered in 1844, Q4 (Cranbrook R.D.). Grace Elizabeth's birth was not registered, but Annie's birth was registered in 1847, Q3 (Marylebone R.D.) and the births of Stephana Maria and Emily were registered in 1849, Q1, and 1850, Q1 (Kensington R.D.).

Alfred Joseph seems to have thought of himself primarily as a surgeon, for that is how he wished to be described in Kelly's 1851 Post Office Directory for London:

Tapson Alfd. J. Surgeon, 35 Gloucester Gdn, Paddington

However, by this time he was already involved in property speculation, and this activity resulted in his having to initiate proceedings in the Court of Chancery in 1853. A Chancery suit (PRO C15/72/T13), listed as *Tapson v Manning*, refers to him as *Alfred Joseph Tapson of Gloucester Gardens, Hyde Park, esquire, bachelor of medicine, Plaintiff* and names the two defendants as *Jeremiah Manning* and *Sarah Thornhill Spinster*.

The Bill of Complaint was signed by William Crofts, the Chancery barrister husband of Alfred Joseph's sister Stephana Springett Crofts (page 257). According to this Bill, on 9 April 1851 Alfred Joseph Tapson agreed to buy from Jeremiah Manning *several messuages or tenements and hereditaments in the parish of Marylebone* for the sum of £7,000. These properties had previously been conveyed to Sarah Thornhill with a proviso for their redemption by Jeremiah Manning on the payment of £5,000, with interest. Alfred Joseph Tapson was to pay £5,000 to Sarah Thornhill for the redemption, with interest, on the delivery up of the mortgage and title deeds, and the remainder of the £7,000 purchase money to Jeremiah Manning. Squabbles then began over who should receive the income from the properties, and legal proceedings were commenced.

On 23 June 1851, Alfred Joseph paid Sarah Thornhill's solicitor £5,724 -18 - 5, and on 28 June 1851 he paid into the court £700 in the name of Jeremiah Manning. *Proceedings have been very tedious. The property consists chiefly of houses a very large proportion of the occupiers whereof*

*University College School Register 1831-1891 H. Walton Lawrence

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

are weekly tenants and during the progress of the said suit many of such houses have become greatly delapidated and have not been duly tenanted and recently several tenants have left without paying any rent and since the thirteenth of January last there have been no rents collected nor any person authorised to receive the same or to manage the said property. Jeremiah Manning has now refused to complete the conveyance and *conducted himself towards the Plaintiff in a very violent and insulting manner making use of the most unbecoming and disgraceful language*, and he has refused to allow Sarah Thornhill to deliver up the title and mortgage deeds direct to the Plaintiff. The Court's help was required to sort out the affairs between the three parties.

Meanwhile Alfred Joseph's family was increasing, and the entry for his household in the 1861 census for Paddington (PRO RG9/3 Fo.11) shows him very much the Victorian gentleman, living in a very substantial property in a then fashionable district of London less than half a mile north of Kensington Gardens, with a large family *upstairs* and almost as large an establishment *downstairs*:

35 Gloucester Gardens

Alfred J. Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*41*	*General Practitioner in Med^{e} & Surgery*	*Surrey, St George's Southwark*
Anne E. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*41*		*Kent, Goudhurst*
Grace E. Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*15*	*Scholar at home*	*Middlesex, St Marylebone*
Anne Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*13*	*„ „*	*„ „*
Stephana Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*12*	*„ „*	*Middlesex, Paddington*
Emily Tapson	*Dau*		*11*	*„ „*	*„ „*
Edith Tapson	*Dau*		*9*	*„ „*	*„ „*
Mary A. Tapson	*Dau*		*8*	*„ „*	*„ „*
Ethel S. Tapson	*Dau*		*7*	*„ „*	*„ „*
Helen A. Tapson	*Dau*		*6*	*„ „*	*„ „*
Anna M. Tapson	*Dau*		*2*	*„ „*	*„ „*
Mary Neve	*Niece Visitor*	*Un*	*20*	*None*	*Kent, Cranbrook*
Wilhelmina C. Köch	*Governess*	*Un*	*19*	*Governess*	*Germany, Frankfurt*
Isabella Edwards	*Serv*	*Un*	*38*	*Nurse*	*Essex, Ingatestone*
Sarah R. Alston	*Serv*	*Un*	*55*	*Monthly Nurse*	*Essex, Woodford*
Grace Andrews	*Serv*	*Un*	*40*	*Cook*	*Cornwall*
Ann Roberts	*Serv*	*Un*	*23*	*Parlour Maid*	*Wales, Merionethshire*
Celia Hall	*Serv*	*Un*	*20*	*Housemaid*	*Kent, Balton(?)*
Emily Brown	*Serv*	*Un*	*19*	*Nursery Maid*	*„ „*
Henry Donaldson	*Serv*	*Un*	*16*	*Page*	*Middlesex, St Marylebone*

Since the earlier census the further births had been registered (Kensington R.D.) of Edith in 1851, Q4; Mary Alice in 1853, Q1; Septima in 1854, Q2; and Helen Octavia in 1855, Q2; Anna's birth does not appear to have been registered. Septima and Helen Octavia must have been the names given to the seventh and eighth daughters listed in the 1861 census as Ethel S. and Helen A. respectively; no doubt Alfred Joseph and Anne Elizabeth had found time to think up another, more suitable, name for Septima by 1861. Also registered was the birth of Eunice in 1857, Q1, probably Alfred Joseph's only son; but the child did not survive, his death being registered in the same quarter (Kensington R.D.).

Kelly's 1862 directory for London, as well as listing Alfred Joseph at his home address, 35 Gloucester Gardens, also contains the entry:

Tapson & Fox, Surgeons, 48 Kensington gardens sq. W

in the *Commercial* section and, in the *Court* section:

Tapson Alf M.B. 48 Kensington gardens sq. W

At the time of the 1861 census Kensington Gardens Square was still being built and there were no occupants shown for No. 48. The dissolution of the *Tapson & Fox* partnership *by mutual consent* was announced in *The London Gazette* of 20 February 1863, page 901. The Medical Directory for 1864 shows that Alfred Joseph was advancing in his profession and had become a specialist in obstetrics:

Tapson, Alfred Jos. 35 Gloucester-gards, Westbourne-terr. W

M.B. Lond. 1843; L.S.A. 1844; (Univ. Coll.) Mem. Counc. Obst. Soc. Lond.

In 1864, Q1, Anne Elizabeth gave birth to their tenth daughter, Anne Theodosia. The child survived, but the mother died; she would have been about 44 years old. The following year, in 1865, Q4, Alfred Joseph's second marriage was registered (Kensington R.D.). The new wife appears in the 1871 census for Paddington (PRO RG10/7 Fo. 25):

35 Gloucester Gardens

Alfred J. Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*51*	*London General Practitioner*	*Surrey, Southwark*
Eliza R. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*50*		*Scotland*
Grace E. Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*25*		*Middlesex, Marylebone*
Anne Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*23*		*„ „*
Stephana M. Tapson	*Dau*		*22*		*„ „*
Emily Tapson	*Dau*		*21*		*„ „*
Edith Tapson	*Dau*		*19*		*„ „*
Mary A. Tapson	*Dau*		*18*		*„ „*
Ethel Tapson	*Dau*		*17*		*„ „*
Helen Tapson	*Dau*		*16*		*„ „*
Anna M. Tapson	*Dau*		*12*		*„ „*
Anne T. Tapson	*Dau*		*7*		*„ „*
Robert M. Mackilligan	*Stepson*		*26*		*Scotland*
Isabella Edwards	*Serv*	*Un*	*49*	*Domestic*	*Essex, Ingatestone*
Grace Andrews	*Serv*	*Un*	*55*	*„*	*Cornwall, St. Germans*
Margaret Turner	*Serv*	*Un*	*27*	*„*	*Middlesex, London*
Martha	*Serv*	*Un*	*22*	*„*	*Wiltshire, ...*
Mary A. Wilson	*Serv*	*Un*	*28*	*„*	*Yorkshire, Leeds*
Charles	*Serv*	*Un*	*23*	*„*	*Middlesex,L..ham Green*

It is interesting to note that the cook, Grace Andrews, who was already in service with the family at the time of the 1861 census, came from St. Germans.

Alfred Joseph's second wife was Eliza Rannie Mackilligin (née Marquis), widow of William Mackilligin of Relugas in north-west Scotland. Eliza had reared five children from her first marriage: William, Mary Eliza, George, Robert Marquis and Eliza Anne.* Alfred Joseph's second daughter, Annie, must have approved of Robert Marquis Mackilligin's coming to live with them, for in 1880, Q2, they were married (Kensington R.D.). We learn from Alfred Joseph's will (page 262) that Stephana Maria also married a Mackilligin, but the marriage was not registered in England or Wales; it may have taken place in Scotland.

The 1881 census for Paddington (PRO RG11/4 Fo. 49) shows a reduced household:

36 Gloucester Gardens

Alfred J. Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*61*	*General Practitioner*	*Surrey, Lambeth*
Eliza Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*60*		*Scotland, Banffshire*
Edith Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*29*		*Middlesex, Paddington*
Helen Octavia Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*26*		*„ „*
Ann Theodosia Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*17*		*„ „*
Alfred B. Soltare	*Grandson*		*5*		*„ Clerkenwell*
Isabella Edwards	*Serv*	*Un*	*58*	*Nurse*	*Essex, Ingatestone*
Mary Ann Fosters	*Serv*	*Un*	*33*	*Cook*	*Herts*
Amelia Cox	*Serv*	*Un*	*20*	*Housemaid*	*Norfolk, ...*
Anne E. Branch	*Serv*	*Un*	*30*	*Parlormaid*	*?*
George Bishop	*Serv*	*Un*	*16*	*Page*	*Suffolk*

Alfred B. Soltare was a son of Grace Elizabeth, who had married George Soltare in 1874, Q1 (Kensington R.D.). Grace Andrews, the former cook from St. Germans, had probably retired by 1881. It is not clear whether the family had moved house or whether the houses in Gloucester Gardens had been renumbered; Kelly's 1882 directory for London also gives the new address in its *Court* section:

Tapson Alfred Joseph M.B. 36 Gloucester Gardens, Bishop's rd W

*A History of the Mackilligin Families (from Rich Mackilligin of Burnham-on-Sea)

Stephana Maria was listed as a visitor in the census return (PRO RG11/914 Fo. 14) for Tonbridge, Kent :

11 Mt Ephraim Rd

Mary E. Gunn,	*Head*	*Wid*	*39*	*N.K.*	*Scotland, N.K.*
Theodora Newbury	*Niece*		*8*		*India, Lahore .....?*
Guy M. Newbury	*Nephew*		*2*		*„ „*
Stephanie M. Tapson	*Visitor*	*Un*	*32*		*Middlesex, Paddington*
Agnes L. Cockburn	*Serv*	*Un*	*24*	*Nurse*	*Scotland N.K.*

together with a *cook* and a *housemaid*. And her sister Anna Maria was included in the return for the parish of St. Peter, Bedford (PRO RG11/1618 Fo. 98), where she was probably visiting as a friend of Sophia Louisa Dymond:

60 Kimbolton Rd

Henry McLean Dymond	*Head*	*Mar*	*33*	*M.A. Cantab Classical Master*	*South Lincolnshire*
Dorothea Dymond	*Wife*	*Mar*	*32*		*Middlesex, Hampstead*
Hilda McLean Dymond	*Dau*		*1*		*Beds, Bedford*
Sophia Louisa Dymond	*Sister*	*Un*	*21*	*Daur of Doctor of Medicine*	*South Lincolnshire*
Anna Maria Tapson	*Visitor*	*Un*	*22*	*Medical Practitioners Daur*	*Middlesex, Paddington*

together with 22 *Boarders* (boys aged 10 to 19) and 6 *Servants*.

Helen Octavia married David Bayne-Jardine in 1884, Q1, and Mary Alice married Edmund Arthur Helps in 1884, Q3 (both Kensington R.D.). Isabella Edwards, the nurse who was already with the family at the time of the 1851 census, was again included in Alfred Joseph's household in the 1891 census return for Paddington (PRO RG12/3 Fo. 18):

36 Gloucester Gardens

Alfred J. Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*71*	*General Practice in Medicine*	*Surrey, Newington*
Eliza R. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*70*		*Scotland*
Edith Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*39*		*London, Paddington*
Ethel S. Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*37*		*„ „*
Isabella Edwards	*Serv*	*Un*	*69*	*Nurse*	*Essex, Ingatestone*
Ellen Walkley	*Serv*	*Un*	*30(?)*	*Cook*	*Glos., Frampton*
Priscilla Russell	*Serv*	*Un*	*43*	*Parlourmaid*	*Somerset, Combe St Nicholas*
Mary J. Parmenter	*Serv*	*Un*	*29*	*Housemaid*	*London, Poplar*
Francis J. Telfer	*Serv*	*Un*	*21*	*Footman*	*London, St Marylebone*

The death of Eliza Rannie was registered in 1893, Q1 (Paddington R.D.); her age was given as 72.

Kelly's Post Office Directories for Middlesex from 1870 to 1895 have the entry:

Tapson Alf Joseph M.B. Pield heath, Hillingdon, Uxbridge

and that for 1899 the entry:

Tapson, Alfred Joseph M.B. Pield heath lodge, Hillingdon, Uxbridge

Since Alfred Joseph was always at Gloucester Gardens on the census dates, it seems probable that Pield Heath was his country house, used for family holidays. He may have moved into the lodge, as his retirement home, after the death of his second wife and after most of his daughters had left home. It was here that he made his will: •

The Will of Alfred Joseph Tapson dated 6 June 1910

This is the last Will and Testament of me Alfred Joseph Tapson of Heath Lodge Hillingdon in the County of Middlesex M.B. ..... I appoint my son in law Edmund Arthur Helps my daughter Edith Tapson and my friend Edgar Buttanshaw of 26 Budge Row London hereinafter called my

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

CHAPTER 8

BRIDESTOWE TAPSONS ON THE MOVE (II)

8.1 NICHOLAS TAPSON OF TAVISTOCK, FARMER & BUTCHER (B#43A)

Like his brothers Ebsworthy B#42 of Stoke Damerel and John B#43c of St. Germans, Nicholas B#43a also moved away from Bridestowe, although he did not sever completely his ties with that parish. Nicholas was 25 years old at the time of his marriage at Okehampton:

1 Nov 1780 ***Nicholas Tapson & Patience Ball***

A baptism at Sourton, where Nicholas himself had been baptized (page 152), soon followed:

22 Mar 1781 George son of Nicholas Tapson & Patience

Another son, Thomas, was baptized at Bridestowe on 19 March 1783. The burial at Bridestowe on 21 December 1784 (page 132) of *George Tapson, aged 5*, must have been that of the eldest son of Nicholas and Patience, though he would not have been quite 4 years old: there was no other George to whom the burial could refer, and their next son to be born (below) was named George.

About this time Nicholas and Patience moved to Tavistock, and the register of that parish records the further baptisms:

1 Nov 1785	*Agnes*	*dau of Nich^{s} Tapson & Patience*	*3^{d}*
17 Jun 1788	*Mary*	*dau of Nich^{s} Tapson & Patience*	*3^{d}*
19 Feb 1790	*George*	*son of Nicholas & Patience Tapson*	*3^{d}*
23 Apr 1793	*John*	*son of Nicholas Tapson Farmer & Patience*	*3^{d}*
6 May 1795	*William*	*son of Nicholas Tapson Buch^{r} & Patience*	
19 Jun 1798	*Elizabeth*	*dau of Nicholas Tapson Bucher & Patience*	
8 Apr 1802	*Patience*	*dau of Nicholas Tapson Buch^{r} & Patience*	

The second George was buried at Bridestowe on 21 November 1790, aged nine months, and Elizabeth on 12 March 1799, also aged nine months. Thomas was buried at Bridestowe on 10 December 1799; he would have been nearly 17, the age given in his burial entry; and Mary was 23 years old when she was buried at Bridestowe on 27 November 1811 (page 133).

It would seem that Nicholas combined farming with butchery, for he was described in the 1793 baptismal entry as a farmer, and in 1807 he entered into a lease, from the Duke of Bedford, of Penbethy's tenement on the Wilminstone estate, just over a mile to the north-east of Tavistock town:

Tavistock Land Tax Assessment 1807

PROPERTY	*PROPRIETOR*	*OCCUPIER*	£	s	d
Penbethy's Wilminstone	*D of Bedford*	*N. Tapson*	*2*	*0*	*0*

Nicholas continued to farm Penbethy's tenement until 1816, the year when he attained his 61st birthday. He had been one of the witnesses at the Tavistock wedding of his eldest daughter:

7 Jun 1808 ***John Hancock*** *of the Parish of Charles Plymouth, Bachelor and Carpenter &* ***Agnes Tapson*** *of this Parish*
by Banns in the presence of Nicholas Tapson & John Baker

And the Tavistock parish register records the burials of Nicholas and of his widow:

28 Aug 1823 Nicholas Tapson Exeter Lane 67
5 Sep 1839 Patience Tapson Brook Street 83

Patience, the youngest daughter of Nicholas and Patience, continued to live in Tavistock; the 1841 census for that parish (PRO HO107/249/11 Fo. 5) reads:

Barley Market Street
Patience Tapson 30 Dress Mr Born in Devonshire

and that for 1851 (PRO HO107/1883 Fo. 455):

Barley Market Street
Patience Tapson Head Un 39 Dressmaker Devon, Tavistock

Those for 1861 (PRO RG9/1460 Fo. 81) and 1871 (PRO RG10/2147 Fo. 36) show no change in her circumstances, except that her age was given as 48 and 60 respectively, so she must have consistently knocked off about ten years. However, when her death was registered (Tavistock R.D.) in 1873, Q4, her age was recorded as 72: she would actually have been a few months short of her 72nd birthday.•

8.2 JOHN TAPSON OF TAVISTOCK, YEOMAN

John, the eldest surviving son of Nicholas and Patience, took over the Wilminstone tenement from his father, and was 26 when the first of the following baptisms took place at Tavistock:

25 May 1819 Sarah Ann Hanns dau of John & Hannah Tapson, Willmistone, Yeoman
6 Mar 1821 Thomas Robert Hanns son of John & Hannah Tapson, Willminston, Yeoman
21 Feb 1824 Francis George Hanns son of John & Hannah Tapson, Burn Mill, Labourer

Tavistock Land Tax Assessment 1817

Willminstone	*Duke Bedford*	*John Tapson*	*2*	*0*	*0*

John remained the occupier of Penbethy's Tenement right up to the year of his death (though the occupier in 1818 was named as *Ns Tapson*). John and his wife were buried at Tavistock:

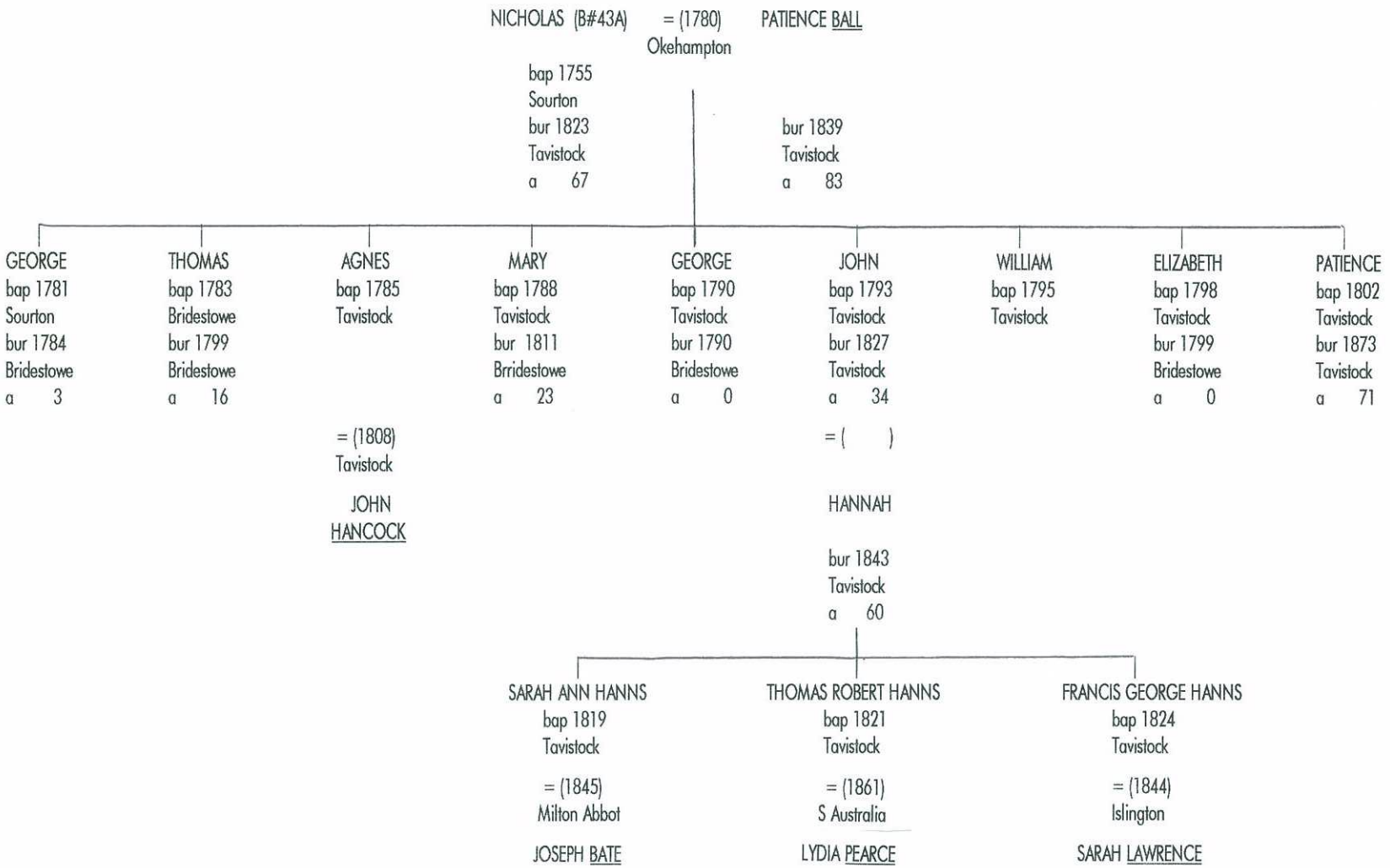
1 Oct 1827 John Tapson Higher Brook Street 34
14 May 1843 Hannah Tapson Lower Back Street 60

Sarah Ann Hanns was married in the parish church of Milton Abbot:

18 Aug 1845 ***Joseph Bate*** *Full Bachelor Carpenter Lamerton*
(Father: Arthur Bate, Carpenter)
Sarah Tapson *Full Spinster Servant Milton Abbot*
in the presence of Susan Martin & Arthur Bate

The bride's father was not named, which suggests that he was already dead: John, the father of Sarah Ann Hanns, had died nearly eighteen years earlier.

•See Appendix VI (Addenda).



DESCENDANTS OF NICHOLAS TAPSON OF TAVISTOCK (B#43A)

8.3 EBSWORTHY TAPSON OF ILMINSTER, COACHMAN (B#50)

The list of publicans' licences (DRO) for the *Division and Hundred of Lifton*, both in 1804 and in 1805, names Ebsworthy Tapson as licensee of the New Inn at Thrushelton. Although this licensee may have been Ebsworthy B#31, he is more likely to have been the second son of that Ebsworthy, Ebsworthy B#50: for the licence was not renewed in 1806 and, as will become apparent, this younger Ebsworthy was soon to be found married and earning his living in Ilminster as a coachman. It was probably also this younger Ebsworthy who was paid for conveying baggage in 1805 from Okehampton to Exeter (page 146) already, perhaps, embarking upon his career as a coachman.•

Although a son, James, was born to Ebsworthy and his wife, Amy, James was not baptized as a baby; and the first reference to a Tapson in the Ilminster parish register is the burial of Ebsworthy's wife who was, according to her burial entry, about 12 years older than Ebsworthy:

2 May 1814 Emy Topsom of Ilminster 43

The following year Ebsworthy remarried in the parish church of Honiton:

*24 Jan 1815 **Ebsworthy Tapson** of the Parish of Ilminster in the County of Somerset Widower & **Elizabeth Collman** of this Parish Spinster by Licence in the presence of ...?... & W^m^ Collman*

Two baptisms then took place in Honiton church

4 Feb 1819 Elizabeth dau of Ebsworthy & Elizabeth Tapson, Honiton, Coachman
9 Jun 1819 James son of Ebsworthy & Amy Tapson, Honiton, Coachman (born 31 Oct 1808)

Honiton, in Devon, and Ilminster, in Somerset, are about 17 miles apart by road. Ilminster lies on the A303; between Ilminster and Honiton the A303 joins the A30 from London, which then passes through (or, nowadays, by-passes) Honiton, Exeter, Okehampton, Launceston, Bodmin, and Penzance, ending at Land's End, the most westerly point of England. Ebsworthy B#50 was 25 when James was born, and James was 10 years old when he was baptized.

Further baptisms were held at Ilminster:

28 Jun 1816 John son of Ebsworthy & Elizabeth Tapson of Ilminster, Coachman
2 Oct 1820 Ann dau of Ebsworthy & Eliz^th^ Tapsom of Ilminster, Coach Driver
19 Oct 1823 Thomas son of Ebsworthy & Eliz^th^ Tapsom, Ilminster, Coachman

It seems that, except for a period in Honiton about 1819, Ebsworthy and Elizabeth lived in Ilminster.

Pigot's 1830 directory for Somerset, under *Ilminster — Bakers*, has the entry:

Tapson William, Silver st

and Bragg's 1840 directory, under the same heading, reads:

Tapson, Elizabeth, (and confectioner) Silver-street

The reference to William Tapson in 1830 is something of a mystery, unless the name was printed in error for Elizabeth (or Ebsworthy). The family were still in Silver Street at the date of the 1841 census for Ilminster (PRO HO107/929 Fo. 41), although James, Elizabeth and Ann had left home:

Silver Street			
Ebsworthy Tapson	*55-59*	*Coachman*	*Not born in Somersetshire*
Elizabeth Tapson	*55-59*		*Not born in Somersetshire*
John Tapson	*20-24*	*J*[ourneyman]	*Born in Somersetshire*
Tho^s^ Tapson	*15-19*	*Ap*[prentice]	*Born in Somersetshire*

Ebsworthy B#50 was nearly 58 at the time of the census.

Ebsworthy would have been nearly 60 when he was buried at Ilminster:

4 May 1843 Ebsworthy Tapson Ilminster 60

After her husband's death Elizabeth carried on with the bakery business, but a change of address is indicated by the entry in Pigot's 1844 Somersetshire directory, again under *Ilminster — Bakers*:

Tapson Eliz (& Confectioner) East st

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

Ann, the second daughter of Ebsworthy and Elizabeth, married George Pittman in 1849, Q4 (Isle of Thanet R.D.). Ebsworthy's widow was living with them, in the City of London parish of St. Gregory by St. Paul, at the time of the 1851 census (PRO HO107/1528 Fo. 288):

9 Great Carter Lane

George Pittman	*Head*	*Mar*	*30*	*Victualler*	*Middlesex, Tower Hill*
Ann Pittman	*Wife*	*Mar*	*30*		*Somersetshire, Taunton*
Elizabeth Tapson	*"Relative"*	*Wid*	*66*	*House Keeper*	*Devonshire, Ilminster*
Henry Savage	*Serv*	*Un*	*21*	*Waiter*	*Surrey, Walworth*

Elizabeth was described in the Honiton marriage register entry as being *of this Parish*, and in the 1841 census return as *Not born in Somersetshire*, so it would seem that she was born at Honiton, not at Ilminster (which is in Somersetshire!) as stated in this census return. Perhaps the census information was provided by George Pittman who may have been somewhat hazy about the topography of the South-west of England, so also incorrectly naming as his wife's birthplace Taunton, the county town of Somersetshire some 10 miles from Ilminster. If her age was correctly given, Elizabeth would have been born about 1784 and so would have been about 30 years old when she married Ebsworthy; at the time of this his second marriage Ebsworthy was 31 years old.

8.4 JOHN TAPSON OF DEPTFORD & EXETER, BAKER

The elder son of Ebsworthy and Elizabeth was married at Ilminster:

5 May 1842 ***John Tapson*** *Full* *Bachelor* *Baker* *Ilminster*
(Father: Ebsworthy Tapson, Coachman)
Jane Coleman *Full* *Spinster* *Ilminster*
(Father: Robert Coleman, Wheelwright)
in the presence of Wm Rowe & Elizabeth Strundel(?)

Like his half-brother James (page 272) John had obviously learnt his bakery craft in his parents' business, in which as children they had no doubt been required to help. The name of John's bride suggests that she may have been a cousin on his mother's side.

At the time of the 1851 census John and Jane were living in the parish of St. Paul, Deptford (PRO HO107/1584 Fo. 405):

22 Hales St

John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*32*	*Baker*	*Somerset, Ilminster*
Jane Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*32*		*„ Taunton*

John would have been at least 34 years old at the time of the census. Deptford, in Kent, is just south of the Thames and to the south-east of the City of London.

It seems likely that the Jane Tapson whose death was registered (Greenwich R.D.) in 1859, Q4, was John's wife; Greenwich is just to the east of Deptford. And the Elizabeth Tapson whose death had been registered in 1855, Q2 (Greenwich R.D.) may well have been his mother, then about 70 years old, who had been living with her younger daughter in 1851, but perhaps subsequently went to stay with her elder son. It is also a possibility that the Sarah whose birth was registered (Greenwich R.D.) in 1844, Q2, was a daughter of John and Jane. The respective death or birth certificates would determine the truth or otherwise of these suppositions. There is no evidence of any other children of the marriage.•

John returned to Devon, where he was included in the1881 census return for the Exeter City Workhouse, Heavitree Road, in the parish of St. Sidwell (PRO RG11/2152 Fo. 139):

John Tapson *Inmate* *Widower* *65* *Baker* *Somersetshire, Ilminster*

He was buried the following year in Exeter Cemetery:

10 Sep 1882 *John Tapson* *St. Sidwells* *62*

John's age should have been entered as 66.

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

8.5 JAMES TAPSON OF EXETER, BAKER

James, the son of Ebsworthy and his first wife, Amy, was 44 years old at the time of his marriage at the church of St. James, Exeter:

15 Jan 1853 ***James Tapson*** *Full Bachelor Baker St. Pancras*
(Father: Ebsworthy Tapson, Coachman)
Mary Banfield *Full Spinster St. Pancras*
(Father: Thomas Banfield, Smith)
in the presence of Rob[t] Rowe & Rebecca Peterfield

Billings 1857 directory of Devonshire lists, under *Exeter*:

Tapson James, baker, Clifton rd

and James and Mary are recorded at this same address in the 1861 census return for the parish of St. Sidwell, Exeter (PRO RG9/1394 Fo. 94):

31 Clifton Road

James Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*46*	*Baker*	*Devon, Honiton*
Mary Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*46*		*Somerset, Ilminster*

James was baptized at Honiton, but had probably been born at Ilminster; he should have given his age as 52! Almost the same address is given in Kelly's 1866 directory, under *Exeter — Commercial*:

Tapson James, baker, 32 Clifton rd

Mary's funeral was held at St. James's, the church in which she had been married:

6 Apr 1866 Mary Tapson Albert Street 57

Albert Street is off Clifton Road. The next year James remarried; his second marriage was registered in 1867, Q1 (Exeter R.D.), and this was followed by a baptism at the church of St. James:

6 Sep 1868 Emma dau of James & Eliza Jane Tapson, Clifton Road, Baker

The name of James's second wife is erroneously given as *Emma* in the 1871 census return for the parish of St. Sidwell, Exeter (PRO RG10/2062 Fo. 102):

Clifton Road

James Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*58*	*Baker*	*Devon, Honiton*
Emma J. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*42*		*Cornwall, Padstow*
Emma Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*2½*		*Devon, Clifton Rd, Exeter*

Kelly's 1873 directory again lists James under *Bakers* at Clifton Road, but two years later his funeral was held at St. Sidwell parish church; he would have been 66 years old:

20 Mar 1875 James Tapson Fishers Terrace 67

His widow and daughter appear in the 1881 census for St. Sidwell (PRO RG11/2149 Fo. 21):

1 Marsh Place

John Willcocks	*Head*	*Mar*	*37*	*Farmer*	*Devon, Meavy*
Jane Tapson	*Boarder*	*Wid*	*51(?)*		*Cornwall*
Emma Tapson	*„*	*Un*	*12*	*Scholar*	*Devon, Exeter*

Also in the household were John Willcocks's family and another *boarder*.

Emma was married at the church of St. Sidwell, Exeter:

26 Dec 1892 ***John Aplin*** *23 Bachelor Coach-Smith*
Holy Trinity, Bath (Father: William Aplin, Plasterer)
Emma Tapson *24 Spinster*
6 Silver Place, Paul Street (Father: James Tapson, Baker)
by Banns in the presence of John Henry Stonewall(?) & Alfred Aplin

James's widow was buried in Exeter Cemetery:

12 Mar 1907 Eliza Jane Tapson St. Matthew 77 Dissenter •

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

8.6 THOMAS TAPSON OF CAMBERWELL, BANKER'S CLERK

At the time of the 1851 census Elizabeth, Ebsworthy's elder daughter, was working in the City of London parish of St. Lawrence Jewry (PRO HO107/1529 Fo. 334); the head of the household was not in residence, but Elizabeth was being visited by her youngest brother, Thomas:

3 Gresham St

Elizth Tapson	*Housekeeper*	*Un*	*30*	*Devon*
Thos Tapson	*Visr*	*Un*	*27*	*Somerset*

Also in the household were an *Assistant*, a *Servt*, and a *Porter*, his wife and three daughters. Thomas's age is correctly recorded, but Elizabeth should have admitted to being 32 years old. She seems not to have married, and would have been about 58 when the death of an Elizabeth Tapson of that age was registered (London City R.D.) in 1878, Q1.

Thomas was married at the Congregational Chapel, Castle Street, Reading, Berkshire:

19 May 1862 ***Thomas Tapson*** *38 Bachelor Bankers Clerk 32 Abchurch Lane*
(Father: Ebsworthy Tapson Deceased, Confectioner)
Sarah Kingston *24 Spinster Reading, Berks*
(Father: James Kingston Deceased, Leather Cutter)
in the presence of James Albert Kingston, Maria Kingston & John Stransom

The births were registered (Camberwell R.D.) of Thomas Ebsworthy in 1863, Q2; Alice Gertrude in 1864, Q3; Frank H. in 1866, Q2; Frederick Albert in 1868, Q1; and Harry Kingston in 1870, Q4.

The 1870 Post Office Directory for Middlesex gives

Tapson Thos, 11 Clifton rd, Peckham

Peckham is in the district of Camberwell, across the river to the south of the City of London. All the family except Alice Gertrude appear in the 1871 census for Camberwell (PRO RG10/734 Fo. 51):

11 Clifton Rd

Thomas Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*47*	*Banker's Clerk*	*Somerset, Ilminster*
Sarah Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*32*		*Berks, Reading*
Ebsworthy T. Tapson	*Son*		*7*	*Scholar*	*Surrey, Camberwell*
Frank H. Tapson	*Son*		*5*	*"*	*" "*
Frederick A. Tapson	*Son*		*3*	*"*	*" "*
Harry K. Tapson	*Son*		*6 mo.*		*" "*
Maria Kingston	*Mother -in-Law*	*Wid*	*66*	*Formerly Milliner*	*Suffolk, Thorington*
Annie E. Connor	*Serv*	*Un*	*15*	*General Serv (Domestic)*	*Yorkshire, Leeds*

The 1871 Post Office Directory for London, Southern Suburbs, gives a new address:

Tapson Thos, 40 Rye hill pk, Pckhm rye SE

Thomas was shown at the same address in the 1874 Post Office Directory for Surrey, but the 1876 London, Southern Suburbs, directory indicates a further move:

Tapson T, 12 Chadwick rd, Peckham SE

Yet another new address is given in the 1878 Surrey directory:

Tapson T, 77 Talfourd rd, Camberwell

All the family were still there for the 1881 census for Camberwell (PRO RG11/675 Fo. 29):

77 Talfourd Rd

Thos Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*57*	*Banker's Clerk*	*Som, Ilminster*
Sarah Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*42*		*Berks, Reading*
Thomas E. Tapson	*Son*		*17*	*Scholar*	*Peckham*
Alice G. Tapson	*Dau*		*16*	*"*	*"*
Frank H. Tapson	*Son*		*15*	*"*	*"*
Fredk A. Tapson	*Son*		*13*	*"*	*"*
Harry K. Tapson	*Son*		*10*	*"*	*"*
Amelia Downham	*Serv*	*Un*	*20*	*Genl Serv*	*Lambeth*

The London, Southern Suburbs, directories for 1880 and 1884, and the 1882 Surrey directory, show no change, but the 1887 Post Office Directory for Kent has the entry:

Tapson Thomas, 20 Manor pk, Lee

Thomas's address was unchanged in the 1890 directory for Kent and in the London, Southern Suburbs, directories of 1888, 1892 and 1894.

The 1891 census return for Lee (PRO RG12/518 Fo. 78) shows all the family except Thomas Ebsworthy still living at home:

20 Manor Park

Thomas Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*67*	*Banker's Cashier*	*Somerset, Ilminster*
Sarah Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*52*		*Berks, Reading*
Alice G. Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*26*		*Surrey, Peckham*
Frank H. Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*25*	*Life Insurance Clerk*	*„ „*
Frederick A. Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*23*	*Banker's Clerk*	*„ „*
Harry K. Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*20*	*Banker's Clerk*	*„ „*
Amelia Downingham	*Serv*	*Un*	*30*	*Cook Dom Serv*	*„ Lambeth*
Kate E. Wray	*Serv*	*Un*	*14*	*Gen^{l} Serv*	*„ Dorking*

Thomas Ebsworthy married Florence Elizabeth Lockwood on 6 June 1888 at Lambeth. The Post Office Directory for Kent gives his address in 1890:

Tapson T. E. 1 Pattenden rd, Catford

This was still his address at the date of the 1891 census for Lewisham (PRO RG12/521 Fo. 202):

1 Pattenden Rd

Thomas E. Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*27*	*Bank Clerk*	*London, Peckham*
Florence E. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*28*		*Surrey, Streatham*

He was shown at the same address in the 1894 London, Southern Suburbs, directory, but had moved by the time the 1899 Surrey directory was published:

Tapson T. E. 87 Wolfington rd, W. Norwood

The Will of Thomas Tapson dated 23 September 1874

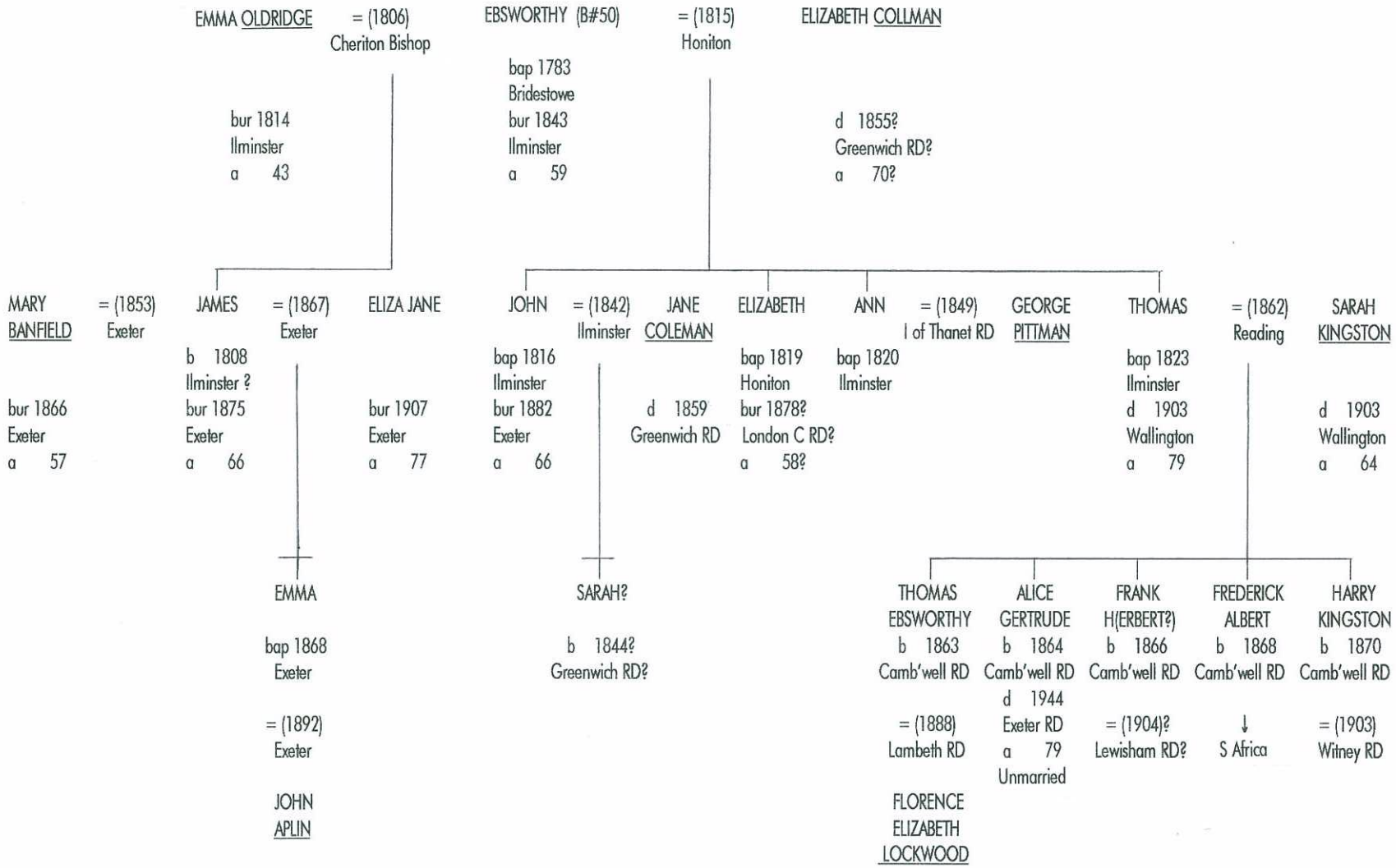
This is the last Will & Testament of me Thomas Tapson of 12 Chadwick Road Grove Park Peckham in the county of Surrey I hereby give and bequeath to my dear wife Sarah for her own absolute use and benefit All personal estate of what nature or kind soever which I may die possessed of or be entitled to including any monies payable to me or my estate by virtue of any policy or policies of Assurance upon my life And I appoint my wife sole Executrix of this my will Dated this 23rd day of September 1874

Thomas Tapson

Thomas died on 2 March 1903 at Llanberis, Rose Road, Wallington, Surrey; his age was correctly recorded on his death certificate as 79. Probate of his will was granted to his widow, Sarah, on 15 April 1903, his estate being valued at £750. Within two months of this grant of probate, on 9 June 1903, Sarah also died at Llanberis; she was 64. Administration of her estate, valued at £407 - 6 - 6 gross, was granted to *Thomas Ebsworthy Tapson of Eastcote Park Lane Wallington aforesaid Bank Clerk the natural and lawful Son* on 27 June 1903.

In 1903, Q3, soon after the deaths of his parents, the marriage of Harry Kingston was registered (Witney R.D.). Not long afterwards, in 1904, Q1, the marriage of a Frank Herbert Tapson was registered (Lewisham R.D.); a copy of the marriage certificate would probably confirm that this was the marriage of the second son of Thomas and Sarah. No marriage was registered in England or Wales for Alice Gertrude or for Frederick Albert. [According to Gerald Ebsworthy Tapson, a descendant of Thomas Ebsworthy Tapson, neither Harry Kingston nor Frank H. had any issue; he believes that Frederick Albert* emigrated to Australia.] Thomas Ebsworthy and Florence Elizabeth had two sons, Cyril Ebsworthy Thomas, born 1893, Q3 (Lewisham R.D.), and Frank Arthur Stuart, born 1895, Q4 (Lambeth R.D.); both were named in their father's will proved on 23 August 1926.

*See Appendix VI (Addenda).



DESCENDANTS OF EBSWORTHY TAPSON OF ILMINSTER (B#50)

8.7 JOHN TAPSON OF PLYMOUTH, WHEELWRIGHT (B#51)

The following appears in the marriage register of the Plymouth church of St. Andrew:

15 Apr 1807 ***John Tapson*** *of this Parish &* ***Elizabeth Coram*** *of this Parish*
by Banns in the presence of Ebsworthy Tapson, Ann Tapson & James Boulter

It will be shown later that John was Bridestowe #51; so Ebsworthy might have been his father or his brother, and Ann his mother or his sister. The wedding was soon followed by a baptism at Marystow:

19 Jul 1807 Jane Coram dau of John Tapson & Elizabeth

Two more children of John and Elizabeth were baptized at the church of Charles the Martyr, Plymouth:

6 Jun 1813 Mary Ann dau of John & Elizabeth Tapson, Tavistock Street, Wheelwright
5 Nov 1817 John son of John & Elizth Tapson, Tavistock Street, Wheelwright

The THREE TOWNS' DIRECTORY for 1822 and that for 1823 have the entry under *Plymouth*:

Tapson, John, Wheelwright, Old-town-without

In 1824 John took on an apprentice. The apprenticeship indenture (WDRO 353/2), dated only by the year, illustrates the difference between a Trade and a Poor Apprentice (page 160):

This Indenture Witnesseth that James Roberts now aged about fourteen years or thereabouts Son of Thomas Roberts of Plymouth ..... Doth put himself an Apprentice unto John Tapson of Plymouth aforesaid Wheelwright and Smith to learn his Art, and with him after the manner of an Apprentice, to serve from the day of the date of these presents for and during and unto the full End and Term of Seven Years ..... during which Term the said Apprentice his said Master faithfully shall and will serve, his Secrets keep, and all his lawful Commandments every where shall gladly do. Shall do no damage to his said Master nor see it be done of Others, but to his Power shall let or forthwith give Notice to his said Master of the same. The Goods of his said Master he shall not Waste, nor lend them unlawfully to any. Hurt to his said Master he shall not do nor cause to procure to be done; He shall neither Buy nor Sell without his said Masters Leave. Taverns, Inns or Alehouses he shall not Haunt. At Cards, Dice, or Tables, or any other unlawful Game he shall not Play; Matrimony he shall not contract nor from the Service of his said Master Day and Night shall absent himself; but in all Things, as an honest and faithful Apprentice, shall and will demean and behave himself towards his said Master and all Persons during all the said Term And the said John Tapson the Master for and in Consideration of the Covenants and Agreements hereinbefore and hereinafter contained Doth hereby covenant promise and agree with and to the said James Roberts and Thomas Roberts that he the said John Tapson his said Apprentice in the Art Trade or Mystery of a Wheelwright which he now useth shall Teach and Instruct, or cause to be Taught and Instructed, the best Way and Manner that he can; he also shall and will pay and allow unto his said Apprentice the sum of one shilling weekly and every week during the first and second years of the said Term the sum of two shillings weekly and every week during the third year of the said Term the sum of three shillings weekly and every week during the fourth year of the said Term the sum of four shillings weekly and every week during the fifth year of the said Term the sum of five shillings weekly and every week during the sixth year of the said Term and the sum of six shillings weekly and every week during the seventh or last year of the said Term and the said Thomas Roberts the Father Doth hereby covenant promise and agree with and to the said John Tapson in manner following that he the said James Roberts the apprentice shall and will well and faithfully and honestly serve and obey the said John Tapson as a true faithful and honest apprentice during the said Term and also that he the said Thomas Roberts shall and will find provide and allow for and to his said Son sufficient Meat Drink Washing Lodging Cloathes and wearing apparell and also Physick and necessary attendance in case of sickness for and during all the said Term

A new address is listed under *Wheelwrights*, in Pigot's 1830 directory for Devonshire:

Tapson John, 8 Saltash st

This address appears in the burial entry for John's wife in the Ebenezer Wesleyan Burial Ground:

16 Nov 1831 Elizabeth Tapson Saltash Street, Plymouth 47

Just under two years later John remarried at East Stonehouse:

23 Jun 1833 ***John Tapson*** *of this Parish a widower &*
Mary Ann Johnson *of this Parish a widow*
by Banns in the presence of John Sunmers & Elizabeth Bickford

John was back in Saltash Street, with his second wife, for the 1841 census, when they appear in the return for the parish of St. Andrew, Plymouth (PRO HO107/269/7 Fo. 9):

Saltash Street			
John Tapson	*54*	*Wheelwright*	*Born in Devonshire*
Mary Tapson	*45*		*Not born in Devonshire*
Johanna Tapson	*20*		*Born in Devonshire*

Until a baptismal entry can be found for her it remains uncertain whether Johanna, who would have been about 13 years old at the time of the 1833 wedding, was a daughter of John and his first wife, or of Mary Ann and her first husband, since a child sometimes adopts the stepfather's surname.

John's Saltash Street address is given again both in Pigot's 1844 directory and in White's 1850 directory; and John and Mary Ann are found there in the 1851 census return for Plymouth, St. Andrew (PRO HO107/1879 Fo. 475):

8 Saltash Street					
John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*66*	*Wheelwright employing 3 men*	*Devon, Bridestowe*
Mary A. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*54*		*Cornwall, Penzance*

together with two *lodgers*. John's place of birth and age confirm that he was B#51; he would have been 65½ at the time of the census.

Slater's directory of about 1852/3 lists John at 8 Saltash Street under *Wheelwrights*, but Billings 1857 Directory of Devon has the following entry under *Plymouth*:

Tapson John, beer retailer and wheelwright, "Royal Oak", 8 Saltash st

John bequeaths both businesses in his will:

<u>The Will of John Tapson dated 17 January 1858</u>

I John Tapson being in ill health but of sound mind do make this as my last Will and Testament namely I give and bequeath to my Wife Mary Ann Tapson and to my Son John Tapson my Dwelling House situate in Saltash Street and Mill Lane jointly for their use and benifit the rents and profits thereof (after paying all just claims on the same) to be divided equally between the said Mary Ann and John Tapson And I give and bequeath to my said Son John my bussiness as a Wheelwright carried on in the said Premises with the use of the Workshops et. also the Timber and Tools therein for his use and benifit he paying the debts due on the said Trade or Business And I give and bequeath to my said Wife Mary Ann Tapson the beer Business now carried on in the said Premises together with the stock in trade and Utensils of the said Beer Trade for her Use and Benifit And I give and bequeath all my Household Furniture Plate and Clothes et. to my said Wife for her Use and Benifit And I hereby propose and direct that the necessary expences of my funeral shall be paid jointly by the said Mary Ann & John Tapson from the first proceeds of the Rents of the said House & Premises And I hereby appoint Mr Joseph Pearse of New Passage and Mr William Bickford as my Trustees and Executors of this my last Will and Testament ..... This Seventeenth day of January One Thousand Eight Hundred and Fifty Eight
And I hereby appoint my said Wife Mary Ann the Administratrix to this my will to let the Apartments to receive the Rents thereof to pay all just demands on the same and to divide the overplus thereof equall between herself & my Son John every Half Year under the sanction of one of the Trustees
Signed and delivered by me *John Tapson*

The will was witnessed by William Bickford, Robt Besley and Elizabeth Bickford (who made her mark); the third of these witnesses was perhaps the Elizabeth Bickford who had been a witness at John's marriage to Mary Ann in 1833.

John died on 16 March 1858, just two months after drawing up his will; he was buried at the Ebenezer Wesleyan Burial Ground, Plymouth, where his first wife had been buried:

20 Mar 1858 John Tapson Saltash St, Plymouth 72

His will was proved on 20 December 1858, the first Tapson will to be proved in the civil probate court.

The 1851 census return for Stoke Damerel (PRO HO107/1882 Fo. 353) shows John's eldest daughter staying with her aunt:

No 2 Brunswick Cottages

Ann Coram	*Head*		*59*	*House Property*	*Cornwall, Saltash*
Jane C. Tapson	*Niece*	*Un*	*43*		*Devon, Marystow*

Jane Coram was also buried at the Ebenezer Wesleyan Burial Ground:

27 Nov 1879 Jane Coram Tapson Plympton St 72

Accurate ages were recorded for Jane Coram and her father, who were both 72 years old

The 1881 census return for Pennycross (PRO RG11/2188 Fo. 86), the northern part of Plymouth formerly the parish of Weston Peverell, has the entry:

Peverell Terrace

Elizabeth Harvey	*Head*	*Un*	*58*	*Devon, Plymstock*
Mary A. Tapson	*Visitor*	*Un*	*64*	*Devon, Plymouth*

Mary Ann would have been 67 years old. She was still at this address when she made her will:

The Will of Mary Ann Tapson dated 22 April 1886

The last Will and Testament of Mary Ann Tapson Spinster of 10 Peverill Terrace in the Tything of Pennycross County of Devon I give devise and bequeath to my Nephew John Tapson only Son of my dear and beloved Brother deceased John Tapson of Plymouth. I devise to my Nephew the said John Tapson belonging at present to H.M. Coastguard all my freehold property situate 8 Saltash Street and 1 Mill Street in the Borough of Plymouth County of Devon with all priveliges pertaining thereto for his especial use and benefit during his life and at his decease the said property to descend to his Sons as tenants in common, if no Sons living to inherit the said property to descend to his Daughters as tenants in common independent of marital controul I direct that the property is not to be sold or mortgaged I also bequeath the family walled grave in Ebenezer Wesleyan Burying Ground Saltash Street to the said John Tapson and direct that it be kept in repair I also appoint the said John Tapson whole and sole Executor to this my last Will and Testament Mary Ann Tapson

Mary Ann would have been 76 years old when she died on 16 October 1889 at Pennycross; she was buried in the Ebenezer Wesleyan Burial Ground:

19 Oct 1889 Mary Ann Tapson 10 Peverell Terrace, Plympton, Plymouth 74

Probate of her will was granted on 3 March 1896 at Exeter to *John Tapson, the Nephew.* Her brother, John, had already been buried (page 279) in the family grave at the Ebenezer Wesleyan Burial Ground, which was opened in 1817, but destroyed by bombing during World War II. The only other Tapson burial there was the earliest, that of Ann Tapson in May 1831, six months before the burial of John's first wife; this suggests that she was the mother of John B#51 (page 146).

The marriage is recorded in the Cornish parish of Maker, near Plymouth:

13 May 1841	***William Anthony Spiller***	*Full*	*Bachelor*	*Mariner*	*H. M. S. Acorn*
	Mary Ann Tapson	*Full*	*Spinster*		*In this Parish*

(Father: John Tapson, Wheelwright)

by licence in the presence of Philip Turner & Mary Austin

Since John B#51 was the only John Tapson known to have been a wheelwright, it seems at least a possibility that the bride was his daughter, who would have been just about 28 years old at the time. If so, the implication must be that the couple subsequently separated, and that Mary Ann reverted to her maiden name and the title of *Spinster*; she does not appear as *Mary Ann Tapson* in any of the 1851 census returns for Devonshire or Cornwall.

8.8 JOHN TAPSON (JUNIOR) OF PLYMOUTH, WHEELWRIGHT

The marriage of John's son, John, was not registered in England or Wales, but his first two children were baptized at the church of Charles the Martyr, Plymouth:

18 Feb 1848 Ellen Jane — *dau of John & Elizabeth Tapson, Gibbon Street Wheelwright*

7 Nov 1849 Mary Ann Elizabeth — *dau of John & Elizabeth Tapson, Gibbon Street Wheelwright (born 22 Aug 1849)*

John would have been 33 at the time of the 1851 census, when he appears in the return for the Plymouth parish of Charles the Martyr (PRO HO107/1878 Fo. 544):

6 Duke St

John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*32*	*Wheelwright*	*Devon, Plymouth*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*32*		*Cornwall, Torpoint*
Mary Ann Tapson	*Dau*		*1*		*" "*

Ellen Jane, missing from this return, was staying with her maternal grandparents, and is listed in the return for the Plymouth parish of St. Andrew (PRO HO107/1879 Fo. 630):

40 St Andrew Street

John Colepack	*Head*	*Mar*	*68*	*Navy Pensioner*	*Hampshire, Gosport*
Susanna Colepack	*Wife*	*Mar*	*68*		*Kent, Gillingham*
Ellen Tapson	*Granddau*		*3*		*Devon, Plymouth*

So, unless her mother remarried, *Colepack* must have been the maiden name of John's wife, Elizabeth.

The year after the census Mary Ann Elizabeth was buried at Plymouth, St Andrew:

11 Nov 1852 Mary Ann Elizabeth Tapson — *Catherine Street* — *3*

Another child was baptized at Plymouth, Charles the Martyr:

30 Dec 1855 John Charles — *son of John & Elizabeth Tapson, Guilford Street Wheelwright (born 12 Aug 1853)*

Then Ellen Jane was buried at Ford Park Cemetery:

7 Mar 1858 Ellen Jane Tapson — *Tavistock St., Plymouth* — *10*

Nearly ten years later there was another Ford Park burial:

1 Nov 1868 Elizabeth Tapson — *Well St., Plymouth* — *53*

Although her age, to be consistent with that given in the 1851 census, should have been recorded as 49 or 50, this Elizabeth must have been John's wife; for she had died before the 1871 census, when John was shown as a widower in the return for Plymouth, St. Andrew (PRO RG10/2117 Fo. 103):

4 Graham St.

Ann Jermyn	*Head*	*Wid*	*44*	*Annuitant*	*Devon, Clovelly*
Mary A. C. Jermyn	*Dau*	*Un*	*13*	*Scholar*	*Cornwall, Bude*
Thomas C. Jermyn	*Son*	*Un*	*9*	*"*	*" "*
John Tapson	*Boarder*	*Wid^{r}*	*52*	*Wheelwright*	*Devon, Plymouth*

Just over a year later John was buried at the Ebenezer Wesleyan Burial Ground:

17 May 1872 John Tapson — *4 Graham St., Plymouth* — *55*

John would have been in his 55th year. It is surprising that, although John was buried in the family vault at the Ebenezer burial ground, neither his two daughters nor his wife had been interred there. Also unexplained is how the property situated in Saltash Street and Mill Lane, which John B#51 had bequeathed (page 277) jointly to his widow and his son, was in the possession of his second daughter, Mary Ann, when she made her will (page 278). A possible explanation is that this came about because her step-mother remarried (once more) after John's death: no burial was ever registered of a *Mary Ann Tapson* that could refer to John's widow, but the marriage was registered in 1860, Q4, just over two years after John's death, of a *Mary Ann Tapson* (Plymouth R.D.); the marriage certificate might resolve the problem. Perhaps the property went to Mary Ann, rather than to her elder sister, because Jane Coram had expectations from her aunt with whom she was living in 1851 (page 278).

8.9 JOHN CHARLES TAPSON OF PLYMOUTH, ROYAL NAVY

His *Certificate of Service** records that John Charles, the only son of John Tapson, joined the Royal Navy as a boy entrant on 8 January 1870. After a year at H.M.S. Ganges he joined H.M.S. Amar as *Boy 1st Class* on 19 January 1871, and he subsquently served at this same rank on H.M.S. Ocean and H.M.S. Kingdom. Although his baptismal entry (page 279) gives his date of birth as 12 August 1853, his naval documents assert that he was born on 14 September 1854. He initially enlisted for a ten-year engagement to begin on 14 September 1872, his eighteenth birthday, and later, on 12 August 1882, re-enlisted for a further ten-year engagement to begin on 14 September 1882. His service record is detailed in the *Register of Seamen's Services* (PRO ADM188/55):

Name	Date of Birth	Place of Birth	Date and Period of C.S. Engagement
John Tapson	14 Sep 1854	Plymouth	14 Sep 1872, 10 years. 14 Sep 1882, 10 years

Height	Hair	Eyes	Complexion	Official No.
5 1¼	Dk Brown	Brown	Fresh	70049

Ship Served in	Rating								Character	If Discharged
Kingdom	B 1C	1	Jan	72	—	31	Jan	73	V G	
Iron Duke	„	1	Feb	73	—	28	Feb	73		
„ „	Ord 2C	1	Mar	73	—	15	Apr	73	V G	
Dwarf	„	16	Apr	73	—	31	Aug	73		
„	Ord	1	Sep	73	—	30	Nov	74	V G	
Victor Emanuel	„	1	Dec	74	—	11	Jan	75	V G	
Iron Duke	„	12	Jan	75	—	3	May	75	V G	
Royal Adelaide	„	4	May	75	—	31	Jul	75	Time only	
Triumph	„	1	Aug	75	—	24	Oct	76		
„	A B	25	Oct	76	—	26	Apr	77	Exemplary	
Royal Adelaide	„	27	Apr	77	—	30	Jun	77	Time only	
Eagle	„	1	Jul	77	—	28	Jul	79	Exemplary	
Royal Adelaide	„	29	Jul	79	—	28	Nov	79	„	
Humber	„	29	Nov	79	—	14	Dec	79	Time only	
Thunderer	„	15	Dec	79	—	31	Oct	81	V G	
Royal Adelaide	„	1	Nov	81	—	24	Jan	82	V G	
Britannia	„	25	Jan	82	—	15	Aug	82	V G	
Valiant	„	16	Aug	82	—	21	Sep	82	Time only	Coastguard
„	„ Boat^{m}	22	Sep	82	—	22	Aug	85	V G	
Shannon(Trebane?)	„ „	23	Aug	85	—	3	Feb	90	V G	
„	Com^{d} Boat^{m}	4	Feb	90	—	31	Mar	90	V G	
„ (Buncrana)	„ „	1	Apr	90	—	23	Sep	92	V G	Shore pensioned

John Charles was married in the Register Office for the District of West Derby and Toxteth Park, Liverpool:

13 Jan 1879 ***John Tapson*** *24 Bachelor Seaman*
238 Beaufort Street, Toxteth Park (Father: John Tapson deceased, Wheelwright)
Mary Ann Netherton *21 Spinster*
238 Beaufort Street, Toxteth Park (Father: Joseph Netherton deceased, Miner)
by Licence in the presence of Joseph Pennington & Mary Jane Netherton

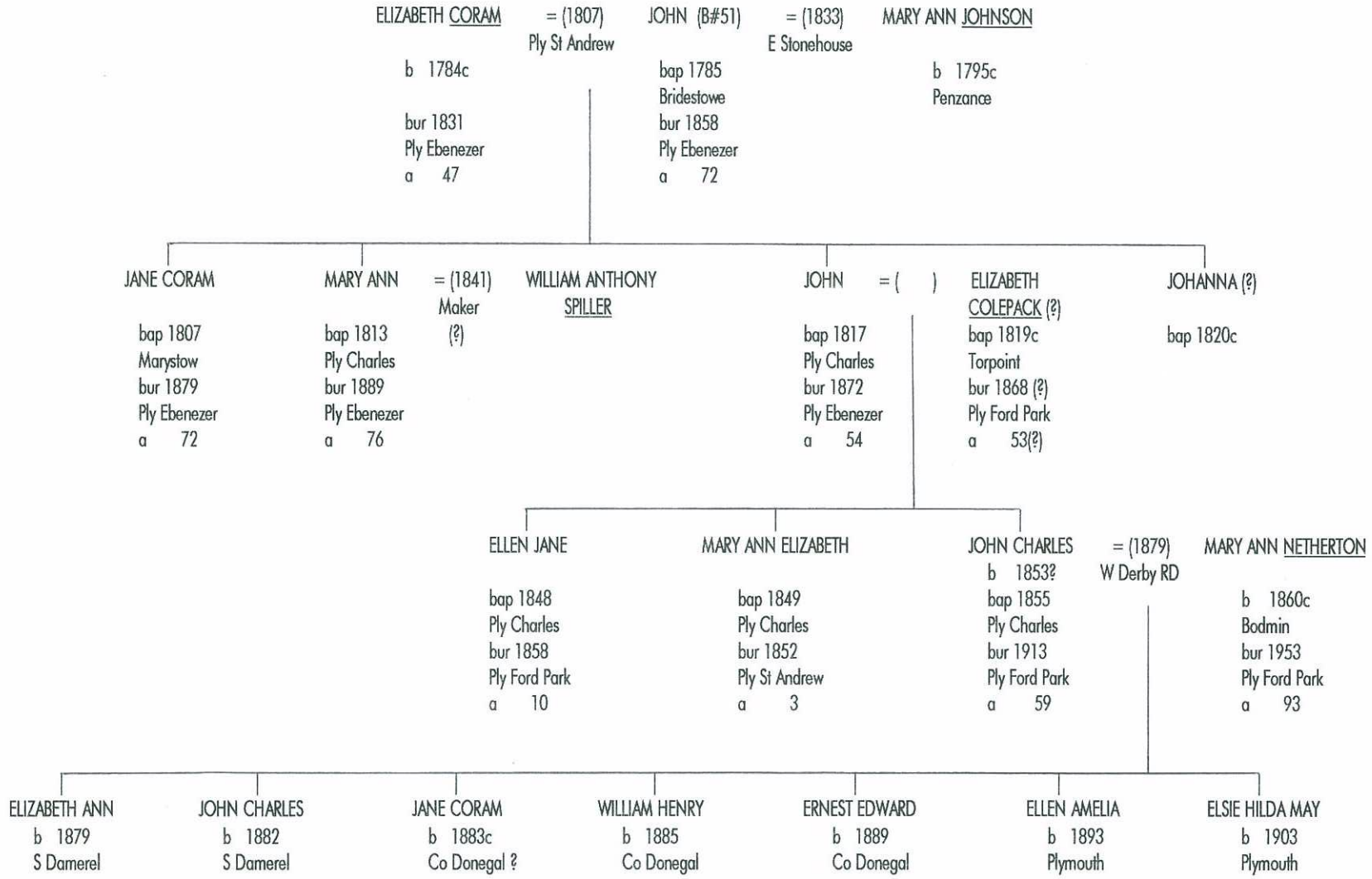
The first child of John Charles and Mary Ann was named Elizabeth Ann. Her birth certificate* states that she was born on 21 November 1879 in the St. Aubyn sub-district of Stoke Damerel.

John Charles was on naval duty aboard H. M. S. Thunderer in Malta Harbour when the 1881 census (PRO RG11/5637 Fo. 20) was taken:

John Tapson A B Married 26 St. Andrews, Plymouth, England

The Thunderer was described as a First Class Turret Ship with a complement of 365.

*In the possession of John Charles's grandson Anthony Charles Tapson.



DESCENDANTS OF JOHN TAPSON OF PLYMOUTH (B#51)

8.10 THOMAS TAPSON OF TIVERTON, CARPENTER (B#63)

It will soon become apparent that the Thomas Tapson who married Jane Walkey at Bridestowe on 12 October 1819 (page 128) was the second son of William Tapson B#45. Thomas would have been nearly 23 years old at the time of this marriage, which was followed, a year later, by the baptism of a daughter at Okehampton parish church:

15 Oct 1820 Iset dau of Thomas & Jane Tapson, Bridestowe, Carpenter

The next child of Thomas and Jane was baptized at St. Mary Major, Exeter:

8 Dec 1822 Robert Walkey son of Thomas & Jane Tapson, Guinea Street, Carpenter

Thomas and Jane were still living at Guinea Street, near the cathedral, when Iset died; her funeral was held at St. Mary Major:

25 Jan 1824 Iset Tapson Guinea St 3

Thomas and Jane, with their baby son, moved to Tiverton, 13 miles north of Exeter, where a daughter, Louisa, was baptized at the Tiverton Wesleyan Methodist Chapel:

10 Jun 1832 Louisa dau of Thomas & Jane Tapson, Tiverton, Carpenter (born 27 May 1832)

Robert Walkey had left home by the time of the 1841 census return (PRO HO107/255/10 Fo. 7) for Tiverton :

Hammetts Lane			
Thomas Tapson	*40-44*	*Carpenter*	*Born in Devonshire*
Jane Tapson	*45-49*		*Born in Devonshire*
Louisa Tapson	*9*		*Born in Devonshire*

The 1851 census return for Tiverton (PRO HO107/1889 Fo. 105) shows Louisa still living at home:

Hammetts Square					
Thomas Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*58*	*Carpenter*	*Devon, Bridestowe*
Jane Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*58*	*Dressmaker & Milliner*	*Cornwall, St. Columb*
Louisa Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*18*	*Pupil Teacher*	*Devon, Tiverton*

Louisa must have been one of the very first batch of teachers to receive their training as *pupil-teachers*, for it was not until 1846 that the Committee of Council on Education allocated grants for able children to carry on at school for five extra years as paid pupil-teachers. They had to be at least 13 years old (Louisa would have had her 14th birthday on 27 May 1846) and the five-year apprenticeship to a master could be shortened if a pupil showed superior merit. After completing their articles successful pupil-teachers were awarded certificates declaring them to be qualified teachers; thus Louisa would have become one of the first professionally qualified teachers in the country.

Louisa had left home by the time of the 1861 census return (PRO RG9/1480 Fo. 32) for Tiverton :

9 Leat Street					
Thomas Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*62*	*Carpenter & Joiner*	*Devon, Bridestowe*
Jane Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*66*		*Cornwall, St. Columb*

Thomas B#63 should have given his age as 54 in the 1851 census and 64 in the 1861 census; the ages given for Jane are also inconsistent.

Louisa was married at the church of St. John the Evangelist, Penge, Surrey:

27 Oct 1864 ***David Faulkner*** *Full Widower Inspector of Weights and Measures*
Hackney (Father: Thomas Faulkner, Gentleman)
Louisa Tapson *Full Spinster Mistress of the Penge Girls School*
Penge (Father: Thomas Tapson, Builder)
by Licence in the presence of Robt W. Tapson & M. J. Greenslade

Penge is south of the Thames, but less than ten miles from the home of Louisa's brother across the river at Shoreditch (page 286); Hackney, David Faulkner's home, is just to the north of Shoreditch.

Thomas's wife, Jane, died in 1866 and was buried at Tiverton cemetery:

24 Feb 1866 Jane Tapson *70*

Just under a year later Thomas remarried at the Tiverton Wesleyan Methodist Chapel:

19 Feb 1867 ***Thomas Tapson*** *67 Widower Retired Carpenter*
Bridge Terrace, Tiverton (Father: William Tapson deceased, Butcher)
Jane Ford *61 Widow*
Barrington Street, Tiverton (Father: William Quick deceased, Shoe maker)
in the presence of Loveday Boobier & Elizabeth Grant

Thomas moved into the home of his second wife, where she had been living with her first husband at the time of the 1861 census for Tiverton (PRO RG9/1479 Fo. 49):

Barrington St

William Foord	*Head*	*Mar*	*45*	*Grocer's Porter*	*Somerset, Ticknam*
Jane Foord	*Wife*	*Mar*	*55*		*Devon, Tiverton*

William Ford's place of birth was presumably Tickenham. Thomas remained in Barrington Street for the rest of his life; it would appear from the 1871 census return (PRO RG10/2170 Fo. 65) for Tiverton, in which he should have given his age as 74, that he took over the grocery business:

Barrington St (Provision Factor's Shop)

Thomas Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*72*	*Provision Factor*	*Devon, Bridestowe*
Jane Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*63*		*„ Tiverton*
Elizabeth Pook	*Lodger*	*Un*	*60*	*Charwoman*	*„ Bampton*

The Will of Thomas Tapson dated 23 June 1870

This is the last Will and Testament of me Thomas Tapson of Barrington Street in the Town of Tiverton in the County of Devonshire Gentleman ..... I give devise and bequeath unto my two dear children Robert Walkey Tapson now residing at Number thirteen Bookham Street in the parish of Shoreditch in the County of Middlesex Gentleman and Louisa Faulkner wife of David Faulkner now residing at Number Forty four Norfolk Road in the parish of Hackney in the County of Middlesex all and every my goods moneys in possession or which may be due or owing to me at the time of my decease and all my property of every description whatsoever ..... And I do hereby appoint the said Robert Walkey Tapson and David Faulkner to be Executors of this my Will ..... In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand being of sound and disposing mind this twenty third day of June One thousand eight hundred and seventy *Thomas Tapson*

When he made his will Thomas seems to have been visiting his son at Shoreditch and his daughter at nearby Hackney, for the two witnesses were *Thomas Faulkner 122 Albion Road Hackney** and *Thos. Geo. Sharp 1 Park Terrace South Hackney*. Thomas died on 4 February 1881, aged 84; he was interred at Tiverton cemetery:

10 Feb 1881 Thomas Tapson *86*

Probate was granted at Exeter on 25 February 1881 to Robert Walkey Tapson; Thomas's effects were valued at *under £100*.

Thomas's widow was living alone at the time of the 1881 census return for Tiverton (PRO RG11/2235 Fo. 55):

Barrington St

Jane Tapson	*Head*	*Wid*	*73*	*Annuitant*	*Devon, Tiverton*

Jane was buried at Tiverton cemetery:

30 Dec 1882 Jane Tapson *74*

Louisa's husband, David Faulkner, died at their home in Stamford Hill, Hackney, on 30 June 1916, aged 89, and Louisa died the following year, on 4 July 1917, aged 85. From their wills we know that three children of the marriage survived them: a son, Daniel Faulkner, and two married daughters, Louisa Tapson Browne and Elizabeth Ann Alpe.

*Thomas Faulkner was probably Louisa's father-in-law (page 284).

8.11 ROBERT WALKEY TAPSON OF HACKNEY, MASTER TAILOR

Thomas's only son, Robert Walkey Tapson, was married in the Independent's Chapel at Shoreditch, which was then in the county of Middlesex:

19 Jun 1847 ***Robert Tapson*** *24 Bachelor Tailor*
17 Paul Street, Shoreditch (Father: Thomas Tapson, Carpenter)
Ann Walter *23 Spinster Dress Maker*
41 New North Street, Shoreditch (Father: Mark Walter, Tailor)
in the presence of George Wood Walter & Georgina Walter

Kelly's 1848 Post Office Directory for London contains the entry:

Tapson Robert, tailor, 17 Paul st, Finsbury

Paul Street runs north from Finsbury Square through Shoreditch; no doubt Robert Walkey thought a Finsbury address would sound better in a trade directory than an address in Shoreditch. He seems to have been successful as a tailor, because the 1851 directory lists a new business address in the City:

Tapson Robert, tailor, 112 London Wall, City

London Wall runs along the south side of what is now the Barbican development, just to the north of St. Paul's cathedral, so many of his customers would surely have been city gentlemen.

Robert Walkey and Ann were residing at 13 Bookham Street in Hoxton Old Town, Shoreditch, when their only child, Robert George, was born on 4 October 1858. He was baptized at the church of St. John the Baptist, Shoreditch (GLRO):

26 Dec 1858 Robert George son of Robert Walkey & Ann Tapson, Tailor, Bookham St.

The family is shown in the 1861 census return for St. Leonard, Shoreditch (PRO RG9/241 Fo. 98):

13 Bookham St

Robert Walkey Thamson	*Head*	*Mar*	*38(?)*	*Forman Tailor*	*Exeter*
Ann Thamson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*37(?)*		*Middlesex, St. Martin's*
Robert George Thamson	*Son*	*Un*	*2*		*„ Hoxton*
George ?	*Border*	*Un*	*29*	*Plumber*	*Wiltshire, ?*

Ann's death, at the age of 43, was registered in 1867, Q2 (Shoreditch R.D.). Three years later Robert Walkey remarried at the church of St. John, East Dulwich:

13 Aug 1870 ***Robert Walkey Tapson*** *Full Widower Draper*
New North Road, Hoxton (Father: Thomas Tapson, Builder)
Elizabeth Mary Woodrow *Full Spinster*
East Dulwich (Father: Thomas Bennett Woodrow, Upholsterer)
by Licence in the presence of Thomas Woodrow & Jessey F. B. Woodrow

Perhaps Robert Walkey's father, visiting Hackney in June 1870 (page 285), stayed on for the wedding.

The newly-weds returned to Robert Walkey's home in Hoxton Old Town, where they appear in the 1871 census return for Shoreditch (PRO RG10/456 Fo. 18):

13 Bookham Street

Robert W. Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*48*	*Foreman Tailor*	*Exeter*
Elizabeth M. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*28*		*M'sex, Bishopsgate*
Robert G. Tapson	*Son*		*12*	*Scholar*	*„ Shoreditch*
Martha Lowton	*Serv*	*Un*	*22*	*Domestic Servant*	*„ Bishopsgate*
Harriet Squire	*Lodger*	*Un*	*23*	*Sewing Machinist*	*„ St. Lukes*
Priscilla S. Stebbing	*Serv*	*Un*	*17*	*Domestic Servant*	*„ „*

Soon after the census the family moved to Dalston, just north of Hoxton, where a daughter, Florence Mary, was born at their home, 83 Shrubland Grove, on 13 December 1871. A further move is indicated by Kelly's 1876 directory for London, Northern Suburbs:

Tapson R.W. 181 Richmond rd, Hackney E

181 may have been a misprint, since subsequent directories give the number of the house as *187*.

187 Richmond Road remained Robert Walkey's address for the remainder of his life; he is listed there in the 1881 census return for St. John, Hackney (PRO RG11/296 Fo. 79):

187 Richmond Rd

Robt Walter Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*58*	*Master Tailor (employing 10 men)*	*Devon, Exeter*
Mary Elizth Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*38*		*Middx, City*
Florence Mary Tapson	*Dau*		*9*	*Scholar*	*„ Hackney*
Henry T. Woodrow	*Nephew*		*8*	*„*	*Surrey, Dulwich*
....? Harrison	*Visitor*		*11*	*„*	*Middx, City*
Mary Bygrave	*Serv*	*Un*	*18*	*Domestic Servant*	*„ Hackney*

The Will of Robert Walkey Tapson dated 6 April 1900

This is the last Will and Testament of me Robert Walkey Tapson of 187 Richmond Road Hackney in the county of Middlesex Gentleman ..... I appoint my wife Elizabeth Mary Tapson to be the sole Executrix of this my will I bequeath to my son Robert George Tapson the following stocks now standing in my name namely seven hundred pounds Great Eastern Railway Ordinary Stock eighty four pounds Great Eastern Railway four per cent Preference (Redemption) stock 1886 and twenty four pounds Great Eastern Railway Preference Stock 1887 ..... And I also bequeath to him the sum of one hundred pounds I bequeath to my daughter Florence Mary Tapson the sum of one thousand and twenty one pounds eighteen shillings and eight pence Cape of Good Hope Consolidated three and a half per cent stock now standing in my name And I give devise and bequeath all the rest and residue of my property ..... unto my said wife Elizabeth Mary Tapson ..... In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand this sixth day of April one thousand nine hundred *Robert Walkey Tapson*

Robert Walkey died at Hackney on 22 March 1903 at the age of 80. He left estate valued at £3,785 - 12 - 1; probate was granted to his widow, Elizabeth Mary, on 17 April 1903. The year after his death his daughter's marriage was solemnized at St. Michael and All Angels, Hackney:

17 Sep 1904 ***Frank Laming Briggs*** *31 Bachelor Manufacturing Chemist*
53 Nightingale Road, Clapton (Father: George Briggs, Druggist's Sundryman)
Florence Mary Tapson *32 Spinster*
187 Richmond Road (Father: Robert Walkey Tapson deceased, Tailor Master)
by Banns in the presence of Arthur C. H. Jupp, D. Faulkner, E. M. Tapson, George Briggs & Louisa Faulkner

Elizabeth Mary died at Upper Clapton on 26 November 1923, aged 81. Apart from a bequest to Henry Thomas Woodrow, her nephew who probably lived with the family since he had been included at 187 Richmond Road in the 1881 census and again in the 1891 census (PRO RG12/191 Fo. 81), Elizabeth Mary left her estate, valued at £2,563 - 10 - 3, to her daughter, Florence Mary Briggs.

As well as giving Robert Walkey's home address in the *Court* section, Kelly's London directories from 1882 to 1900 had also listed, in the *Commercial* section

Robert Walkley & Co, tailors, 6 Wormwood street EC

Wormwood Street, just to the south of Liverpool Street railway station, is the contination eastwards of London Wall, the street in which Robert Walkey's business was listed in 1851 and again in 1852. Wormwood Street leads onto Bishopsgate, the busy thoroughfare running past Liverpool Street railway station; this was the street to which the business moved after Robert Walkey's death. It is listed in the London directories for 1905 and 1910 as:

Tapson Robert Walkley & Co, tailors, 81 Bishopsgate st within

in the London directories for 1915 and 1920 as:

Tapson Robert Walkley & Co, tailors, 71 Bishopsgate

and in those for 1925, 1930, 1935, 1940 and 1941 as:

Tapson Robert Walkley & Co, tailors, 77 Bishopsgate EC2

So the business continued for nearly 40 years after Robert Walkey's death, only to be brought to an end in 1941 by the bombing of London during World War II.

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

8.12 ROBERT GEORGE TAPSON OF HACKNEY, RAILWAY CLERK

Robert Walkey's son was married in the parish church of South Hackney:

24 Jan 1881 ***Robert George Tapson*** *Full Bachelor Clerk GER*
All Saints Green, Norwich (Father: Robert Walker Tapson, Tailor)
Eliza Amelia Moy *Full Spinster*
South Hackney (Father: James Ward Moy, Confectioner)
by Licence in the presence of Thomas Robert Howler & Ellen Moy

A few weeks later Robert George, employed as a clerk for the Great Eastern Railway, was back in Norwich, with his bride, in time for the 1881 census of that city (PRO RG11/1942 Fo. 53):

Cathedral Street

Robert G. Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*23*	*Railway Clerk*	*Middlesex, Hoxton*
Eliza A. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*24*		*„ Hackney*

Robert's age should have been given as 22 and his wife's as 26, for she was born on 23 January 1855. Their first child, Robert James, was born at Cathedral Street on 25 May 1881.

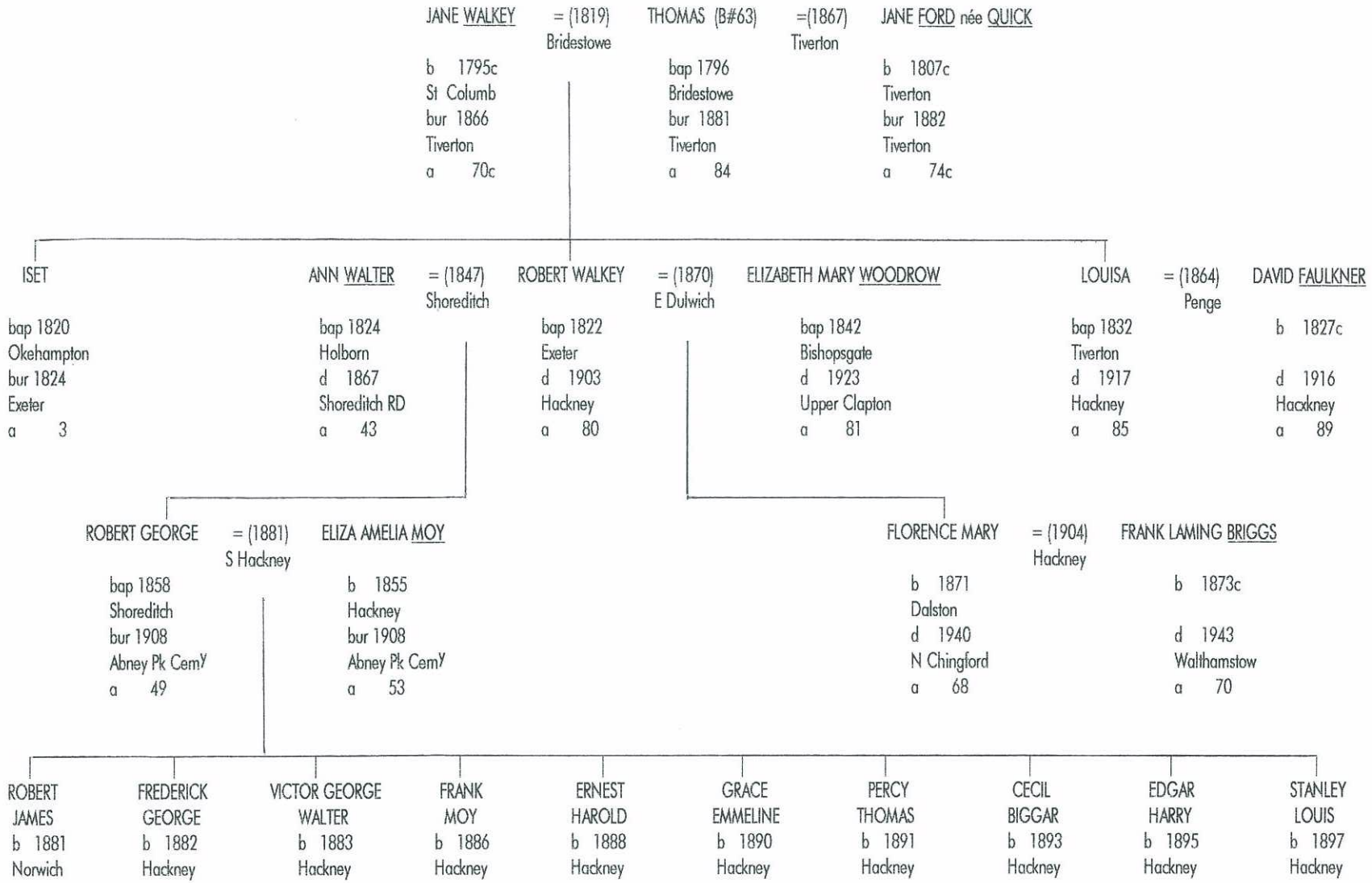
The couple's second child, Frederick George, was born on 22 May 1882 at 10 Beechholme Road, Hackney; his death was registered in 1882, Q3 (West Ham R.D.). Next Victor George Walter was born, on 9 September 1883, at 20 Trelawny Road, Hackney; his death was registered (Hackney R.D.) in 1883, Q4. Robert George and Eliza Amelia then moved into 49 Devonshire Road, Hackney, with their baby son, Robert James. Here were born Frank Moy on 4 March 1886, Ernest Harold on 13 October 1888, Grace Emmeline on 18 March 1890, Percy Thomas on 17 September 1891 (died 1891, Q4), and Cecil Biggar on 6 February 1893. Soon afterwards the family either moved house or the houses in Devonshire Road were renumbered, the last two children of the family being born at 39 Devonshire Road: Edgar Harry on 26 May 1895 (died 1897, Q1) and Stanley Louis on 8 July 1897.[•] Eliza Amelia died on 2 May 1908, aged 53, and Robert George soon afterwards on 15 September 1908, not quite 50 years old; they were interred at Abney Park Cemetery.

The Will of Robert George Tapson dated 18 August 1908

This is the last Will and Testament of me Robert George Tapson of 26 Walsingham Road Clapton in the County of Middlesex Clerk I give & bequeath my ..... gold watch & chain and cameo pin to Robert James Tapson Diamond pin and mourning ring to Frank Moy Tapson Silver watch to Ernest Harold Tapson ..... Gold ring to Ernest Harold Tapson and I hereby declare that ..... the whole of my property ..... shall be held in trust by my son Robert James Tapson to enable him to keep up the home and bring up the younger members of the family subject to this that each of my children shall first have twenty pounds placed to his or her credit If Robert James Tapson fails or does not care to take the risk I hereby decide that the whole of my property ..... less the twenty pounds to each child shall be valued and proportioned into ten shares and distributed as follows three shares for Stanley Louis Tapson three shares for Cecil Biggar Tapson one share for Grace Emmeline Tapson one share for Ernest Harold Tapson one share for Frank Moy Tapson one share for Robert James Tapson and I leave my eldest son Robert James Tapson sole Executor to this my will In Witness whereof I have set my hand to this my will this eighteenth day of August one thousand nine hundred and eight
Robert George Tapson

Probate was granted on 9 October 1908 to Robert James Tapson, who chose not to keep up the family home. He married Dora Frances Croxson on 24 September 1910 at Tottenham; they settled in Upper Clapton. Frank Moy emigrated to Queensland, Australia, but returned to Europe with the Australian Imperial Force and was killed in France on 23 December 1917. Ernest Harold emigrated to Ontario, Canada, where he married Isabel McAlpine. Grace, who did not marry, eventually moved to Rayleigh, Essex. Cecil Biggar married Ethel May Gudge on 19 July 1917 at Bournemouth, where they settled. Stanley Louis married Amy Lilian Searle on 30 December 1930 at Stratton, Cornwall; they too made their home in Bournemouth until his death in 1932.

[•] See Appendix VI (Addenda)



DESCENDANTS OF THOMAS TAPSON OF TIVERTON (B#63)

8.13 JOHN TAPSON OF BISHOPSTEIGNTON, GARDENER (B#64)

The third son of William Tapson B#45 was 30 years old at the time of a marriage at Withycombe Raleigh near the mouth of the river Exe, the parish just to the north of Exmouth:

23 Mar 1830 ***John Tapson*** *of this Parish Bachelor &*
Charlotte Meatherell *of this Parish Widow*
by Banns in the presence of Thomas Wilkins & M. Mack

Charlotte signed her name in the parish register as *Metherell*. A baptism was soon to follow at the church of The Holy Trinity, Exeter:

3 Oct 1830 William Francis son of John & Charlotte Tapson, Magdalen Street Gardener

A baptismal entry for the next child, Charlotte Canley Tapson, shown in subsequent census returns to have been born about 1834, has not yet been found, but another three children were baptized at Kingsteignton, on the river Teign near Newton Abbot:

16 Dec 1838 Sarah Ann dau of John & Charlotte Tapson, Kingsteignton, Gardener (born 4 December 1838)
18 Apr 1841 Eliza Jane dau of John & Charlotte Tapson, Kingsteignton, Gardener (born 5 April 1841)
12 Nov 1843 John Henry son of John & Charlotte Tapson, Kingsteignton, Gardener (born 28 October 1843)

The 1841 census for Kingsteignton (PRO HO107/253/26 Fo. 8), in which the surname is written as *Topsham* (Page 16), was taken before the birth of John Henry, but includes Mary, presumably Charlotte's daughter by her first marriage:

Ware(?) Cross			
John Topsham	*40-44*	*Gardener*	*Born in Devonshire*
Charlotte Topsham	*40-44*		*Born in Devonshire*
Mary Topsham	*15-19*		*Born in Devonshire*
William Topsham	*10*		*Born in Devonshire*
Charlotte Topsham	*6*		*Born in Devonshire*
Sarah Topsham	*3*		*Born in Devonshire*
Eliza Topsham	*2 mo.*		*Born in Devonshire*
Mary Canley	*70-74*		*Born in Devonshire*

Mary Canley was probably John's mother-in-law, hence his eldest daughter's second name, *Canley*.

In 1851 the family appear in the census return (PRO HO107/1870 Fo. 359) for Bishopsteignton, the parish between Kingsteignton and Teignmouth:•

Village					
John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*51*	*Gardener*	*Devon, Bridestowe*
Charlotte Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*51*		*„ Teigngrace*
Charlotte Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*17*		*„ ?*
Eliza Jane Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*10*		*„ Kingsteignton*
John Henry Tapson	*Son*		*7*		*„ „*

John's age and place of birth given here establish that he was Bridestowe #64, who was 51 at the time. He would have been 60 years old when he was buried at Bishopsteignton:

3 Feb 1860 John Tapson Teignmouth 59

The marriage of *Charlotte Canley Tapson* was registered (Newton Abbot R.D.) in 1862, Q4. And Sarah Ann would indeed have been 24 years old when she married at Stoke Damerel:

12 Apr 1863 ***William Walters*** *24 Bachelor Smith Church St.*
(Father: Wiliam Walters, Smith)
Sarah Ann Tapson *24 Spinster Church St.*
(Father: John Tapson, Gardener)
by Licence in the presence of Elizabeth Walters & John Matters

•See Appendix VI (Addenda).

The marriage of John's daughter Eliza Jane to Ellis Vysey was registered in 1870, Q1 in Yorkshire (Goole R.D.), where two daughters were born. By 1881 Eliza Jane was widowed and had returned to Devonshire, as is confirmed by the census of that year (PRO RG11/2163 Fo. 11) for Abbotskerswell, just to the south of the river Teign:

2 Collners(?) Buildings

Eliza Vesey	*Head*	*Wid*	*40*		*Devon, Kingsteignton*
Emma Vesey	*Dau*		*10*	*Scholar*	*Yorkshire, Goole*
Annie Vesey	*Dau*		*7*	*„*	*„ „*
Charlotte Tapson	*Mother*	*Wid*	*82*		*Devon, Teigngrace*

Charlotte was buried at Abbotskerswell:

26 Sep 1884 Charlotte Tapson — Abbotskerswell — 86½

8.14 WILLIAM FRANCIS TAPSON OF PLYMOUTH & LEWISHAM, BAKER

John's eldest son, William Francis, was married at St. Andrew's church, Plymouth:

17 Apr 1853 ***William Francis Tapson*** *23 Bachelor Sugar Refiner Mill Lane*
(Father: John Tapson, Gardener)
Mary Hearn *27 Spinster Mill Lane*
(Father: John Hearn, Laborer)
by Banns in the presence of John Sloman Lovis & Helena Palmer

The first two children of William Francis and Mary were baptized at St. Andrew's church, Plymouth:

14 Jun 1861 Bertha Maud Mary — dau of William Francis & Mary Tapson
Rayleigh Street, Baker (born 29 January 1854)
14 Jun 1861 Evelina Agnes — dau of William Francis & Mary Tapson
Rayleigh Street, Baker (born 8 February 1856)

And Frederick William, whose birth was registered in 1860, Q1, must have been their son named as *William* in the 1861 census, as *Frederick* in the 1871 census, and as *Frederick W* in the 1881 census.

The THREE TOWNS' DIRECTORY for 1860 lists in its *Plymouth* section:

Tapson Mary, baker, 6 Rayleigh Street

This was Mary's address in the 1861 census return for Plymouth, St. Andrew (PRO RG9/1443 Fo. 87):

6 Rayleigh Street

Mary Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*34*	*Baker*	*Devon, Buckland Monachorum*
Charlotte Tapson	*Mother*	*Wid*	*65*		*„ Newton*
Bertha Tapson	*Dau*		*7*	*Scholar*	*„ Plymouth*
Eva Tapson	*Dau*		*5*	*„*	*„ „*
William Tapson	*Son*		*1*		*„ „*

Also included in the household were 4 male *boarders* (two *carpenters*, a *plumber* and a *baker*). Charlotte was William Francis's mother who, in 1881, was living with her daughter Eliza Jane (above).•

Mary was listed as a baker at the same address in the Three Towns' directories of 1862, 1864-5 and 1867, as well as in Kelly's 1866 directory for Devonshire. In 1866 the eldest child of William Francis and Mary was buried at Ford Park Cemetery:

29 Apr 1866 Bertha Maud Mary Tapson — 6 Rayleigh St., Plymouth (St. Andrew) — 12•

A wedding now took place in the church of Charles the Martyr, Plymouth:

27 Feb 1871 ***James Bartlett*** *Full Widower Porter S. D. Railway*
Regent Street (Father: William Bartlett, Labourer)
Mary Tapson *Full Widow*
Regent Street (Father: John Palmer, Labourer in ...?... Dockyard)
by Banns in the presence of R. Evens & Ann Bickel

•See Appendix VI (Addenda).

The combined families of James and Mary are shown, a few weeks after the wedding, in the 1871 census return for Plymouth (PR0 RG10/2119 Fo. 113):

6 Rayleigh Street

James Bartlett	*Head*	*Mar*	*38*	*Guard*	*Devon,*	*Shaugh*
Mary Bartlett	*Wife*	*Mar*	*40*		*„*	*Buckland*
Mary J. Bartlett	*Dau*		*12*	*Scholar*	*„*	*Plymouth*
Bessie Bartlett	*Dau*		*10*	*„*	*„*	*„*
Evelene Tapson	*Dau in law*	*Un*	*18*	*„*	*„*	*„*
Frederick Tapson	*Son in law*		*12*	*„*	*„*	*„*

The address of the house, her birthplace, and the names of her two surviving children, make it certain that Mary had been the wife of William Francis, though Evelina would have been 15 and Frederick 11. In the 1861 census return Mary was recorded as married, but there was no sign of William Francis; and in the 1871 marriage entry she was described as a widow, though the death of William Francis had not been registered in England or Wales.

Whereas in the 1853 marriage entry the name of Mary's father had been given as *John Hearn*, in the 1871 marriage entry it was recorded as *John Palmer*; this fact might seem to suggest that there were in fact two different Marys. However, a search in the Buckland Monachorum register reveals the truth, for her baptismal entry reads:

22 Jan 1826 Mary illegitimate daughter of Agnes Hearn, Buryton

The age of 27 which Mary gave at the time of her first marriage was therefore quite accurate.

It is likely that Mary knew that her father was John Palmer but called him John Hearn in the earlier marriage entry, using her mother's surname, in order to disguise the fact that she was illegitimate; and for perhaps an equally good reason she gave him his correct name in the later entry. It will soon be shown to be significant that, although her surname had changed to *Tapson*, and nearly eighteen years had elapsed, the writing of *Mary* in her signature at the Plymouth Charles marriage was practically identical to what it had been at the time of the Plymouth St. Andrew marriage.

Curiously, in Kelly's 1873 directory for Devonshire, under *Bakers*, Mary is still listed under her former husband's name:

Tapson Mrs M., 6 Rayleigh st, Plymouth

as also in the 1873 Three Towns' directory:

Tapson Mrs. M., grocer, 6 Raleigh St

Curiouser and curiouser: in the 1881 census return for East Stonehouse (PRO RG11/2205 Fo. 52) James Bartlett is shown with a new wife and family:

8 Hobart St

James Bartlett	*Head*	*Mar*	*47*	*Foreman Porter GWR*	*Devon,*	*Shaugh*
Jessie Bartlett	*Wife*	*Mar*	*37*		*„*	*Meavy*
May Bartlett	*Dau*	*Un*	*21*	*Upholsteress*	*„*	*Plymouth*
Annie Bartlett	*Dau*		*5*		*„*	*„*
Fredk Bartlett	*Son*		*3*		*„*	*„*
James Bartlett	*Son*		*3 days*		*„*	*„*
Charlotte E. Bartlett	*Lodger*	*Un*	*36*	*Schoolmistress (Board)*	*„*	*Stonehouse*

There can be little doubt but that this was the same James Bartlett whom Mary had married on 27 February 1871: the ages given for him in the two census returns are almost consistent, and the same place of birth is recorded; and whereas he was a porter with the South Devon Railway at the time of his marriage to Mary, and a guard at the time of the 1871 census, he was, in 1881, a foreman porter with the Great Western Railway. Moreover, the ages given for his daughter Mary (or May) in the two census returns are almost consistent. His eldest child by this most recent marriage must have been born by early in 1876 at the latest, so he had probably left Mary quite soon after their marriage, perhaps before 1873 and hence the reason for her reverting to her former name in the two 1873 trade directories.

The 1881 census throws up yet another surprise; for the return for Lewisham, Kent, (PRO RG11/736 Fo. 145) reveals that William Francis was still alive:

19 Hanover Street

William F. Tapson	*Head*	*Widr*	*50*	*Baker*	*Devon, Exeter*
Frederick W. Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*21*	*Clerk*	*„ Plymouth*

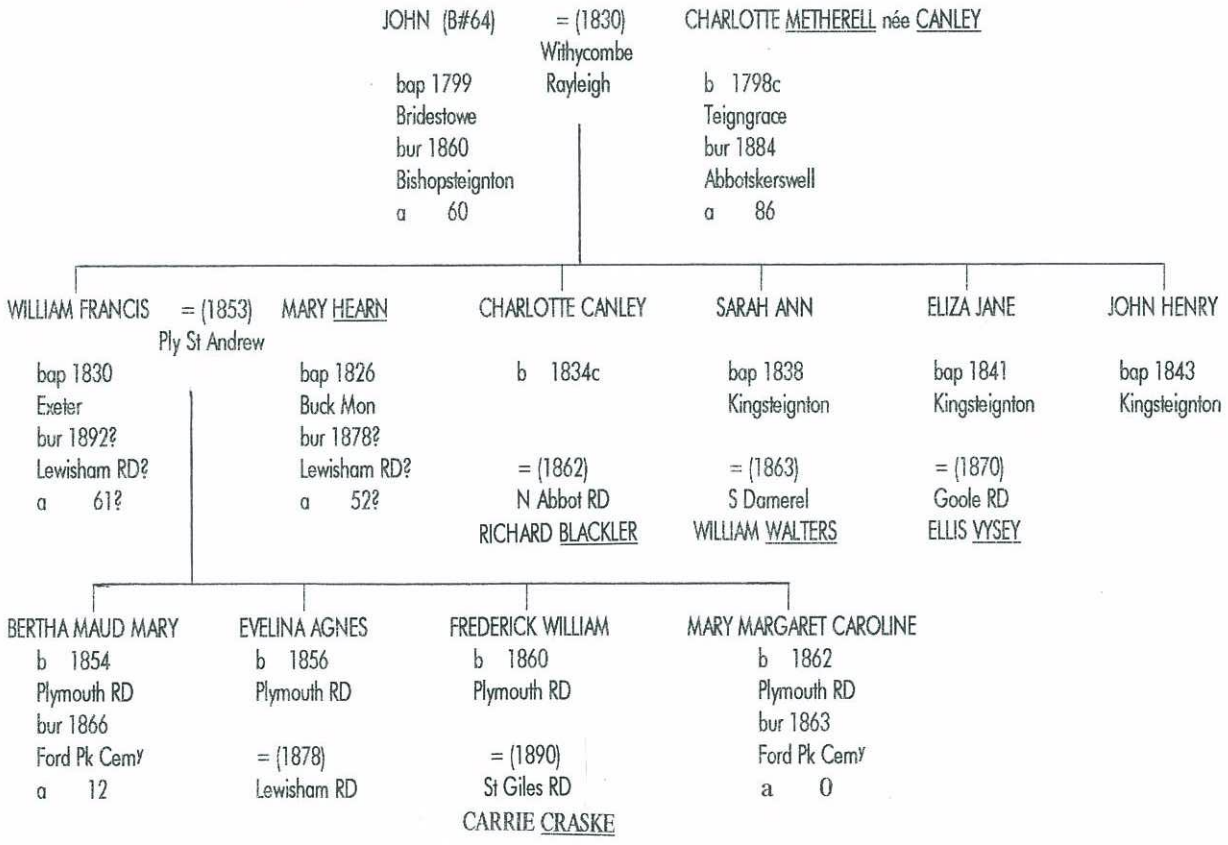
The exact age, the place of birth and the occupation of the head of this household, and the exact age and place of birth of his son, leave no doubt that he was William Francis. And lest there still be any question about this, we observe that the marriage of *Aveline Agnes* was registered in 1878, Q3, also in the Lewisham R.D. No divorce petition was registered in the period from 1859 to 1870 inclusive, so the inevitable conclusion has to be that William Francis had left his wife, who then entered into a bigamous liaison which was not, however, to last long. Perhaps James Bartlett discovered that Mary was not a widow, as she had claimed to be at the time of the bigamous union.

So what became of Mary? It may be no more than a coincidence, but the death of a *Mary Tapson aged 51* was registered in 1878, Q1, again in the Lewisham R.D.; William Francis's wife would have been close to her 52nd birthday at the time, and William Francis certainly claimed to be a widower in the 1881 census. The death certificate of this Mary Tapson would determine whether or not she was the wife of William Francis; if she was, then it would appear that there was some sort of reconciliation, and that Mary and their two surviving children joined William Francis in Lewisham. Mary was not again listed in the Plymouth directories after the 1873 entries, so perhaps she and the children moved to Kent soon after that date.

The *Frederick William* whose marriage was registered in 1890, Q3 (St. Giles R.D.) was probably William Francis's son, who would have been 26 at the time.

And William Francis would have been 61 years old when the death of a *Frank Tapson aged 61* was registered in 1892, Q2, also in the Lewisham R.D.•

Descendants of John Tapson of Bishopsteignton (B#64)



• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

8.15 EBSWORTHY TAPSON OF HOLSWORTHY, BUILDER (B#66)

It would seem that the fourth surviving son of William Tapson B#45 was the groom at a wedding recorded in the Holsworthy parish register:

17 May 1827 ***Ebsworthy Tapson*** *of this parish sojourner &* ***Ann Wonnacott*** *of this parish spinster by Banns in the presence of Samuel Bennett & ..... Hoskin*

Ebsworthy B#66 would have been 24 at the time, and he was probably marrying into the same family, the Wonnacotts of Holsworthy, as his eldest brother, William, had done nine years earlier (page 157). Little evidence of this Ebsworthy has so far come to light: the marriage entry indicates that he was already living in Holsworthy; and he seems to have settled there after his wedding, but there is no baptismal entry in the Holsworthy parish register for any child of the marriage.

Ebsworthy did however leave his mark on Bude, the seaside resort on the Atlantic coast of North Cornwall, about ten miles by road from Holsworthy. Within the ancient parish of Stratton, and known in Mediæval times as Bede Haven because a bede (holyman) kept a fire burning to guide ships into the treacherous harbour, Bude had, until the very end of the Eighteenth Century, merely a handful of houses, mainly fishermen's cottages. Work commenced in 1819 on the construction of a canal, the purpose of which was to replace the pack-horse in carrying lime-rich shell-sand from Bude to enrich the soils of inland farms, and to transport inland such items as tea, sugar, coffee beans, dried fruit and spices, which at that time were beginning to be imported into Bude from Bristol and elsewhere. In 1823 the canal was officially opened as far as Holsworthy, and by the 1830's Bude had become a busy little port, trading as far afield as Bristol and South Wales and importing coal, culm, limestone, phosphate, salt, timber, brick, slate, and even fruit from Spain.

This increase in prosperity during the early years of the Nineteenth Century resulted in the erection of many new houses. Among the builders who were to seize the opportunities offered by the mini-boom was Ebsworthy Tapson, who in 1835 purchased a sixty-year lease on land in Bude owned by the Blanchminster Charity, a long-established Stratton charity named after the lords of the manor from c1254 to 1374 of Bienaimé (now *Binhamy*), the main manor within the parish of Stratton. The indenture of lease (CRO DDP 216/25/301/1) survives, as does another indenture which concerns Ebsworthy's sale of one of the completed leasehold houses (CRO DDP 216/25/301/3). The 1842 tithe map shows that Ebsworthy had sold three of the four houses, which were by that date in the possession of William Bennett, Thomas Drew, Ebsworthy Tapson and Abraham Burden.

Assignment of Lease dated 26 December 1835 (Abstract)

Indenture dated 26 December 1835 between

1. The Trustees
2. Ebsworthy Tapson of Holsworthy, Builder

Agreement to purchase 36 perches of land from 25 March 1835 for the term of 60 years at a yearly rent of £1 - 16 - 0 and to pay all taxes. Within one year to *erect Build and completely finish fit for habitation Four good and substantial Dwelling houses with Stone well cemented with lime and sand and covered with good sound Timber and slate and the internal parts thereof to be built and made with sound Timber and other good materials of proper dimensions and the rooms to be of a size and height fit for such Dwelling houses*

Assignment of Premises dated 14 April 1836 (Abstract)

Indenture dated 14 April 1836 between

1. Ebsworthy Tapson of Holsworthy, Builder
2. Thomas Drew of Stratton, Mariner

States that *Ebsworthy Tapson hath erected and built on the said piece or parcel of Ground four Dwelling houses and Offices* and that *Thomas Drew hath contracted and agreed with the said Ebsworthy Tapson for the absolute purchase of the second House "No 2" of the said Dwelling houses and Offices thereto belonging at or for the price or sum of one hundred and thirty pounds*

Tryphena's age should have been entered in the census return as 27; her marriage was registered the following year, in 1852, Q2 (Okehampton R.D.). Ann was married at Chagford, a village about five miles south-east of South Zeal and the home parish of Dorcas's husband:

25 Jun 1859 ***George Brimblecombe*** *23 Bachelor Husbandman Chagford*
(Father: John Brimblecombe, Husbandman)
Ann Tapson *22 Spinster Chagford*
(Father: John Tapson, Carpenter)
in the presence of Eliza Cottle & James Brian Colecombe

In the 1861 census return (PRO RG9/1467 Fo. 123) John's household is shown thus:

South Zeal

John Tapson	*Head*	*Widr*	*70*	*Carpenter*	*Devon, Bridestowe*
George Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*39*	*Schoolmaster*	*„ South Tawton*
Elizabeth Mason	*Visitor*	*Un*	*30*	*Dressmaker*	*„ „ „*

John had only his son George at home at the time of the 1871 census (PRO RG10/2153 Fo. 129):

South Zeal Village

John Tapson	*Head*	*Widr*	*81*	*Carpenter*	*Devon, Bridestowe*
George Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*50*	*Schoolmaster*	*„ Southtawton*

John would have been nearly 88 years old when he was buried at South Tawton:

8 Feb 1880 John Tapson South Tawton 93

The 1881 census return for South Tawton (PRO RG11/2224 Fo. 120) shows George living alone:

South Zeal

George Tapson	*Head*	*Un*	*60*	*Schoolmaster*	*Devon, Southtawton*

and by 1891 he had given up his home and moved into the *South Zeal London Inn*, at which address he is included among the residents in the census return for South Tawton (PRO RG12/1755 Fo. 107):

George Tapson	*Lodger*	*Un*	*70*	*Living on his own means*	*Devon, South Tawton*

George would have been 73 years old when he was buried at South Tawton:

1 Apr 1894 George Tapson Week 75

Week, George's home at the time of his death, was perhaps East Week, just over a mile to the south-east of South Zeal village beyond West Wyke, the one-time home of the Battishills (page 91).

8.17 THOMAS TAPSON OF SOUTH TAWTON, CARPENTER

John's youngest son, Thomas, who would actually have been 20 years old at the time, was included in the 1851 census return for Chagford (PRO HO107/1885 Fo. 555) in the household, one assumes, of other members of his mother's family:

Mill

Valentina Curson	*Head*	*Wid*	*56*	*Annuitant*	*Devon, South Tawton*
George Curson	*Son*	*Un*	*24*	*Miller*	*„ „ „*
William Curson	*Son*	*Un*	*22*	*Miller*	*„ „ „*
Thomas Tapson	*Serv*	*Un*	*18*	*Miller (?)Waggoner*	*„ „ „*

Thomas would have been 29 at the time of his marriage at South Tawton:

14? Aug 1859 ***Thomas Tapson*** *25 Bachelor Carpenter Ramsleigh*
(Father: John Tapson, Carpenter)
Joanna Fewins *27 Spinster Ramsleigh*
(Father: James Fewins, Labourer)
in the presence of John Northcott & William Fewins

Joanna's illegitimate son had already been baptized at South Tawton:

16 Apr 1854 George Pyne dau of Johanna Fewins South Tawton Single Woman

Ramsley, as it is now spelt, is a hamlet about half a mile west of South Zeal village. At the time of the 1861 census for South Tawton (PRO RG9/1467 Fo. 120) Thomas and his family were living there at the home of Joanna's parents, who were not in residence at the time:

Ramsley

Thomas Tapson	*Son-in-law*	*Mar*	*28*	*Carpenter*	*Devon, Southtawton*
Joanna Tapson	*Dau*	*Mar*	*29*		*„ „*
George Pine	*G[d]son*		*7*		*„ „*
Mary Ann Tapson	*G[d]dau*		*1*		*„ „*

Mary Ann had already been baptized at South Tawton parish church, and the baptism of a son there was to follow a few years later:

29 Jan 1860 Mary Ann dau of Thomas & Joanna Tapson, Ramsleigh, Carpenter
4 Sep 1864 Thomas son of Thomas & Joanna Tapson, Ramsly, Labourer

Thomas's complete family is shown in the 1871 census return for South Tawton (PRO RG10/2153 Fo. 135):

Ramsley

Thos Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*36*	*Lime Quarry Lab.*	*Devon, Southtawton*
Joanna Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*37*	*„ „ „ Wife*	*„ „*
George Pine	*Son*	*Un*	*16*	*Shoemaker*	*„ „*
Mary Ann Tapson	*Dau*		*10*	*Scholar*	*„ „*
Thomas Tapson	*Son*		*6*	*„*	*„ „*

By the time of the 1881 census the family had left home (PRO RG11/2224 Fo. 126):

Ramsley

Thomas Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*51*	*Carpenter*	*Devon, Southtawton*
Joanna Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*50*	*„ Wife*	*„ „*

However, the youngest child of Thomas and Joanna appears on Folio 138 of the same census return:

Ball Cottage

James Stanley	*Head*	*Mar*	*59*	*Carpenter & Wheelwright*	*Devon, Okehampton*
Eliza Stanley	*Wife*	*Mar*	*56*	*„ „ Wife*	*„ Southtawton*
William Redstone	*Apprentice*	*Un*	*20*	*Carpenter's Apprentice*	*„ „*
Thomas Tapson	*„*	*Un*	*16*	*„ „*	*„ „*

The daughter of Thomas and Joanna, then 21 years old, was the only Mary Tapson whose birth had been registered around 1860 to whom the following entry in the 1881 census return for Kensington (PRO RG11/27 Fo. 150) could apply. She was included, along with another servant, in the household of James Paul, a *Manufacturer*, and his family at 47 Addison Road:

Mary Topson Serv Un 21 Ho. maid Devon, Okehampton

Okehampton was the nearest town to her village of birth. Mary Ann was married at South Tawton:

12 Jul 1883 ***Edward Woods*** *23 Bachelor Mason South Tawton*
Mary Ann Tapson *23 Spinster South Tawton*
(Father: Thomas Tapson, Carpenter)
by Banns in the presence of John Woods & Emma Ford)

Thomas and Joanna were still living at Ramsley at the time of the 1891 census for South Tawton (PRO RG12/1755 Fo. 110):

Ramsley

Thomas Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*60*	*Carpenter*	*Devon, South Tawton*
Joanna Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*59*		*„ „ „*

Thomas would indeed have been 77 years old at the time of his funeral at South Tawton:

30 Apr 1908 Thomas Tapson Ramsley in South Tawton 77

Joanna's death was registered in 1926, Q2 (Okehamptom R.D.); her age was given as 97. If she gave her correct age at her wedding, she would actually have been about 94 when she died.•

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

8.18 WILLIAM TAPSON OF BRISTOL, SCHOOLMASTER

The two eldest sons of John and Mary Ann both became teachers. Although George retired in South Tawton, it is not certain whether he became schoolmaster of the South Zeal village school, or whether he taught elsewhere and was visiting his father, during the Easter vacations, at the times of the earlier censuses. He is described in the 1851 return (page 296) as a *Classical Instructor*, but there is likely to have been little scope for his abilities in that capacity at South Zeal. In 1841 he had not been included in the census for South Tawton; he would at that time have been 20 years old, so he was probably then either teaching away from the village or still pursuing his own education.

William certainly left Devon sometime around his 17th birthday, for it is stated in his obituary (page 301) that he had taught in Taunton for four years before moving in 1838 to Bristol, where he subsequently opened a school of his own in Castle Street. A notice* which he placed in the *Bristol Mirror* of 31 December 1842 indicates the range of subjects offered at this school:

ACADEMY
No. 69 CASTLE-STREET, BRISTOL
Mr. Tapson, in acknowledging his sincere thanks for past favours, respectfully informs his Friends and the Public, that his School will Reopen for Classical, Mathematical, and Commercial Pursuits, on MONDAY, January 9th, 1843.

A year later William married in the parish church of Bedminster, Bristol:

2 Jan 1844	***William Tapson***	*Full*	*Bachelor*	*School Master*
	Redcliff, Bristol		*(Father: John Tapson, Wheelwright)*	
	Ann Hill Shewring	*Full*	*Spinster*	
	Bedminster		*(Father: Luke Shewring, Commission Agent)*	

by Licence in the presence of William M. Shewring & James Shewring

The births were then registered (Bristol R.D.) of William Shewring in 1846, Q1 (died 1848, Q3); Frank Curson in 1847, Q3 (died 1848, Q4); Annie Jane in 1848, Q3; and Agnes Martha in 1850, Q3 (died 1850, Q3).

By 1851 William had transferred his *academy* to Queen Square, where he is found in the census return of that year for Bristol (PRO HO107/1948 Fo. 15):

24 Queen Square

William Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*33*	*School Master*	*Devon, South Zeal*
Ann Hill Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*30*		*Bristol*
Anne Jane Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*2*		*„*
Frideswides Shewring	*Sister-in-law*	*Un*	*33*		*„*
James Wm Turner	*Serv*	*Un*	*19*	*School Assistant*	*Warwickshire, Coventry*

together with two female *house servants* and 13 *pupils* (boys aged 8 to 15).

More births followed: Alfred Edward in 1851, Q3; Marston Ebsworthy in 1852, Q4; Arthur Henry George in 1853, Q4 (died 1854, Q1); Fred Augustus in 1854, Q4 (died 1854, Q4); Edith Mary in 1855, Q4 (died 1856, Q3); Emily Susanna Tayler in 1857, Q1; Charles William in 1858, Q2; Laura Sophia in 1859, Q3 (died 1861, Q2); and Bessie Louisa in 1861, Q1. Most of the surviving children are listed in the 1861 census return for Bristol (PRO RG9/1716 Fo. 43):•

24 Queens Sqr

William Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*43*	*School Master*	*Devon, South Zeal*
Ann H. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*39*		*Bristol*
Alfred E. Tapson	*Son*		*9*	*Pupil*	*„*
Marston E. Tapson	*Son*		*8*	*„*	*„*
Charles W. Tapson	*Son*		*2*		*„*
Bessie L. Tapson	*Dau*		*1 mo.*		*„*
Susanna Taylor	*Lodger*	*Mar*	*83*	*Fund Holder*	*Westminster*
Mary ?	*Nurse*	*Wid*	*45*	*Monthly Nurse*	*Somerset, Pensford*

*Information provided by Mary Morris, a descendant of William Tapson.

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

Also included were 6 *pupils* (boy boarders aged 9 to 13) and a female *servant* (aged 13). Missing from this census return are Annie Jane (aged 12) and Emily Susanna Tayler (aged 4, and presumably named after the lodger, who may have been an elderly relative). It is interesting that William reintroduced the *Ebsworthy* name into his branch of the family, as well as using other family names such as Shewring and Curson.

The births of four more children of William and Ann were registered (Bristol R.D.): Alice Mary in 1862, Q4; Herbert Shewring in 1864, Q3 (died 1864, Q3); Howard Shewring in 1866, Q2; and finally Archibald Ernest in 1868, Q2. All the surviving children except Annie Jane, the eldest, are included in the 1871 census return for Bristol (PRO RG10/2523 Fo. 28):

24 Queen Square

William Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*53*	*Schoolmaster*	*Devon, Zeal*
A. H. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*57*	*„ Wife*	*Bristol*
A. E. Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*19*	*Chemist & Druggist*	*„*
M. E. Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*18*	*Warehouseman*	*„*
E. S. T. Tapson	*Dau*		*14*	*Scholar*	*„*
C. W. Tapson	*Son*		*12*	*„*	*„*
B. L. Tapson	*Dau*		*10*	*„*	*„*
A. M. Tapson	*Dau*		*8*	*„*	*„*
H. S. Tapson	*Son*		*4*		*„*
A. E. Tapson	*Son*		*2*		*„*
W. Stanbridge	*Assistant*	*Un*	*26*	*School Assistant*	*Bucks, Winslade*
Sarah Edwards	*Servant*	*Un*	*19*	*Domestic Servant*	*Bristol*
Catherine Iangate	*Servant*	*Un*	*15*	*„ „*	*Berks, Reading*

There were also 11 *scholars* (boy boarders aged 9 to 15).

The death of Bessie Louisa, aged 17, was registered (Bristol R.D.) in 1878, Q4. Apart from two daughters, all of William's surviving children were still living at home at the time of the 1881 census (PRO RG11/2468 Fo. 30), but there were no longer *scholars* in the house:

25 Queen Square

William Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*63*	*Schoolmaster*	*Devon, South Zeal*
Ann Hill Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*60*		*Bristol*
Alfred E. Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*29*	*Chemist's Assistant*	*„*
Mark E. Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*28*	*?Manchester Warehouseman*	*„*
Chas W. Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*22*	*Grocery Assistant*	*„*
A. May Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*18*	*Milliner*	*„*
Howard S. Tapson	*Son*		*14*	*Scholar*	*„*
Archibald E. Tapson	*Son*		*12*	*„*	*„*
Elizth Bridges	*Serv*	*Un*	*22*	*Domestic*	*Monmouth, Chepstow*

The eldest daughter, Annie Jane, was living in Bristol in 1881 with her mother's sister, whose household also included several other relatives (PRO RG11/2484 Fo. 116):

Freemantle No 5

Frideswides Shewring	*Head*	*Un*	*63*	*No occupation*	*Bristol*
Annie Tapson	*Neice*	*Un*	*32*	*„ „*	*„*

Emily Susanna Tayler was working in Bristol as governess to a young family (PRO RG11/2486 Fo. 50):

101 Ashley Road

Charles Lambert	*Head*	*Mar*	*37*	*Commercial Traveller — Haberdashery*	*Dorset, Spetisbury*
Emily Tapson	*Governess*	*Un*	*24*	*Governess Private*	*Bristol*

Howard Shewring was killed aboard the barque Louisa of Bristol on 8 July 1883 (page 302).•

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

The Will of William Tapson dated 14 March 1868

This is the last Will and Testament of me William Tapson of Queens Square in the City of Bristol I give all my real and personal estate unto John Sperring of Winterbourne in the County of Gloucester and Charles Garlick of Castle Street in the City of Bristol ..... Upon trust to sell and convert into money such real and personal estate (excepting household furniture plate glass and pictures which I give unto my dear Wife Ann Hill Tapson) and to invest the sum or sums of money thus arising in the names of my said trustees in or upon the public Stocks funds or securities of the United Kingdom ..... And to pay the annual income thereof to my dear Wife Ann Hill Tapson during her life and after her decease ..... Upon trust for all my children ..... And I appoint my said Wife Ann Hill Tapson and the said John Sperring and Charles Garlick to be Executrix and Executors of this my will In witness whereof I have hereunder set my hand this fourteenth day of March in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty eight *William Tapson*

By the time William died, on 30 November 1891, both trustees were dead, and probate was granted on 4 January 1892 to Ann Hill Tapson, the surviving executor. The estate was valued at £1,122 - 13 - 4 gross, £1,016 - 4 - 2 net. The grant of probate states that William *was formerly of Queens Square but late of Nº 8 Shaftesbury Terrace Ashley Road both in the City and County of Bristol retired Schoolmaster*. William's age was correctly recorded on his death certificate as 74.

An obituary* was published in *The Free Methodist* dated 31 December 1891, the month after William's death:

In Memoriam *MR W. TAPSON, BRISTOL*

The Church at Milk Street, Bristol, has once again been called upon to mourn the loss of one of its "pillars", the late Mr. William Tapson, one of the original founders. He lived to become the father of the Church, and its venerable and much-loved patriarch. His last journey from home was to the sanctuary to take part in a welcome home given to the Rev. J. S. Withington on his return from the Washington Conference. With his dying breath he urged upon the members of his family to do what they could for Milk Street, and that last wish and dying legacy will ever be sacred to them.

He was born October 30th, 1817, at South Zeal, near Okehampton, South Devon. Devoting himself to the scholastic life, he first became assistant in the village day school, then removing to Taunton, laboured there for four years.

In the year 1838 he came to Bristol, and ultimately opened a school of his own in Castle Street, subsequently removing to Queen's Square, where he continued, until his retirement, some eight years ago.

On his arrival in Bristol he became a member of the Wesleyan Chapel, in Old Market Street, but during the Reform agitation was struck off the class books for his sympathy with the Reformers. He then espoused their cause, and took an active part in building the sanctuary, wherein he worshipped for the rest of his life, acting as the first secretary of the trustees. From the time of the opening of the church right up to his death he filled the quiet office of poor steward, and took great and growing delight in caring for the wants and needs of his poorer fellow-members. For some years he was also a class leader.

He was always most regular in his attendance upon the means of grace, both on the Sabbath and week days, and took the deepest interest in the business of the Church and of the circuit at large.

To his family his loss is irreparable, yet a blow whose sting is removed by the memory of his beautiful life and consistent walk.

To the Church, the blow is almost overwhelming, for we all loved him dearly as our father in Israel. He was so true, so gentle, so unassumingly thoughtful, and so wisely sympathetic, and he was always there.

He was laid to rest in Arno's Vale Cemetery on December 5th by Rev. W. Yates, who, on the following Sabbath morning, conducted a memorial service, preaching from the passage "An Old Disciple"

*Information provided by Mary Morris, a descendant of William Tapson.

William's widow, Ann Hill Tapson, died at Bristol on 22 February 1897; her age was given as 76. Two months afterwards, on 24 April 1897, Ann Hill's sister, Frideswides, died at 8 Nugent Hill, Cotham, Bristol. In her will she was described as *Fridaysweed Shewring of Number 5 Feremantle Villas Cotham Brow Bristol Spinster*; she named her niece, Annie Jane Tapson, as sole legatee and executrix of her estate, valued at £849 - 12 - 2 when probate was granted on 9 June 1897.

Four of William's children married: the marriage of Alice Mary to James Simmonds was registered in 1882, Q3 (Bristol R.D.); that of Marston Ebsworthy to Louisa Sebry in 1884, Q3 (Bedminster R.D.); that of Archibald Ernest to Blanche Stott in 1899, Q1 (Toxteth Park R.D.); and the marriage of Emily Susanna Tayler to Charles Frederick Dunn in 1901, Q2 (Bristol R.D.). The following births were registered (Bedminster R.D.) of the children of Marston Ebsworthy and Louisa: Edward Marston in 1885, Q3; Dorothy Annie in 1888, Q2 (died 1890, Q3); Francis William in 1890, Q4 (died 1890, Q4); Winifred Louisa in 1893,Q2; and Gwendoline Mabel in 1894, Q3.

Charles William, who did not marry, died at his home, 138 North Road, St. Andrews, Bristol, on 24 July 1900. He was described as a *Grocery Assistant* in the 1881 census, but as a *Commercial Traveller* in Letters of Administration of his estate, which was valued at £100 - 1 - 2 gross, £75 - 1 - 4 net. Administration was granted to his brother Alfred Edward Tapson, of the same address, on 3 September 1900; Alfred Edward was described as a *Chemist*. The sureties were *Marston Ebsworthy Tapson of N° 13 Vicarage Road Southville in the City and County of Bristol Warehouseman and Annie Jane Tapson of Fern Lodge Nugent Hill Cotham Bristol aforesaid Spinster.*

Marston Ebsworthy died at 13 Vicarage Road, Southville, on 27 December 1916. He bequeathed his estate, valued at £1,017 -18 - 7, to his widow, Louisa, to whom probate was granted on 21 February 1917; Marston Ebsworthy was described as a *Wholesale Clothier's Manager*. Louisa died at 16 Allington Road, Southville on 6 December 1926, leaving an estate valued at £838 - 14 - 2 to her three children, Edward Marston Tapson, Winifred Louisa Riddler and Gwendoline Mabel Tapson.•

Annie Jane, who was blind when she made her will in 1921, died at her home, 8 Greenway Road, Redland, Bristol, on 24 November 1930, leaving estate valued at £12,051 - 3 - 6. The main beneficiaries of her will were her two surviving sisters, Emily Susannah Tayler Dunn and Alice Mary Simmonds, her surviving brothers, Alfred Edward Tapson and Archibald Ernest Tapson, and the children of her deceased brother Marston Ebsworthy Tapson. Annie Jane left her piano to her nephew, Edward Marston Tapson, an *Accountant*, who was one of the executors of her will.•

Alfred Edward, of Lonsdale House, Hampton Park, Redland, Bristol, died on 1 November 1934. Described as *Alfred Edward Tapson of 110 City Road Bristol Retired Chemist* in his will of 24 April 1929, Alfred Edward left small legacies to his sister Emily Susannah Tayler Dunn, his godson Edward Marston Tapson and his landlady; the residue of his estate, valued at £3,471 - 3 - 4, was bequeathed to William Tapson, Howard Andrew Tapson and Margery Tapson, the children of Archibald Ernest and his wife Blanche, after the deaths of their parents, who were to receive the income from the estate during their lifetimes. Archibald Ernest died in 1945, Q1 (Crosby R.D.), aged 76.•

Annie Jane was buried at Arno's Vale Cemetery* in the grave (Square P, N° 981) of her grandparents, Luke and Martha Shewring, as too were her aunt, Frideswides, and Frideswide's cousin Mary Jane Moody. Another grave (Square P, N° 698) has inscriptions for *Laura Sophia Daughter of William and Ann Hill Tapson who died 6th April 1861 Aged 21 months, Susanna Tayler who died 22nd March 186.., Aged 83 Years* [the lodger in 1861], *Herbert Shewring Tapson who died August 1st 1864 Aged 5 Weeks, Bessie Louisa Tapson who died December 10th 1878 Aged 17 Years, Howard Shewring Tapson Son of W. & A. H. Tapson Who died falling from the upper main top sail yard of the barque Louisa of Bristol on his voyage to Demerara, Sunday 8th July 1883 Aged 17 Years, William Tapson who died November 30th 1891 Aged 74 Years, Ann Hill Tapson who died February 22nd 1897 Aged 76 Years,* and *Alfred Edward Tapson who died November 1st 1934 Aged 83 Years.*

*Information provided by Mary Morris, a descendant of William Tapson.

•See Appendix VI (Addenda).

CHAPTER 9

BRIDESTOWE TAPSONS ON THE MOVE (III)

9.1 THOMAS TAPSON OF LYDFORD & LAMERTON, FARMER (B#71)

Thomas, the second son of George Tapson B#47, would have been about 22 years old at the time of a marriage in the parish church of Coryton:

23 Aug 1815 ***Thomas Tapson*** *Sojourner of this Parish &*
Jane Blatchford *Sojourner of this Parish*
by Banns in the presence of John Martyn & .....?

The following baptisms were then recorded in the Lydford parish register:

11	*Jan*	*1818*	*Maria*	*dau of Thomas & Jane Tapson, Downtown, Farmer*
19	*Mar*	*1820*	*Ann*	*dau of Thomas & Jane Tapson, Downtown, Farmer*
2	*Jun*	*1822*	*Jane*	*dau of Thomas & Jane Tapson, Downtown, Yeoman*
29	*Nov*	*1824*	*Elizabeth*	*dau of Thomas & Jane Tapson, Downtown, Farmer*
18	*Sep*	*1825*	*Elizabeth*	*dau of Thomas & Jane Tapson, Downtown, Farmer*
received into church having been privately baptized by me Nov 29th 1824, John Trenick Curate				
18	*Mar*	*1827*	*Mary*	*dau of Thomas & Jane Tapson, Downtown, Yeoman*
5	*Jan*	*1830*	*Thomas*	*son of Thomas & Jane Tapson, Downtown, Yeoman*
26	*Oct*	*1833*	*William*	*son of Thomas & Jane Tapson, Downtown, Yeoman*
1	*Jan*	*1836*	*George Blatchford*	*son of Thomas & Jane Tapson, Downtown, Farmer*

His address in these baptismal entries confirms that this Thomas was Bridestowe #71, whose father had been farming Saunders' Downtown and part of Higher Downtown, as well as Luxmoor, until 1815 (page 155).

The land tax assessments for Lydford show that Thomas took over from his father the leases on Saunders' Downtown and Luxmoor soon after his marriage:

Lydford Land Tax Assessment 1816

Heirs of Calmady Esq	*Thos Tapson*	*Saunders Downtown*	*0*	*18*	*8*
Walter Radcliffe Esq	*Thos Tapson*	*Luxmore Estate*	*1*	*0*	*5*

Thomas farmed these two properties until 1826; during that time the tax assessments show no change except that ownership of Saunders' Downtown passed to *John Gubbins Newton Esq.* in 1817. In 1827 Thomas gave up the lease of Luxmoor, taking on instead Lower Downtown, a much larger property to judge from its higher assessment value:

Lydford Land Tax Assessment 1827

J. G. Newton Esq	*Thos Tapson*	*Saunders Downtown*	*0*	*18*	*8*
Do	*Do*	*Lower Downtown*	*2*	*4*	*0*

The tax assessments, right up to the final one in 1832, show little further change, Thomas continuing as occupier of these same two properties which his grandfather, John Tapson B#20, had been farming some two decades before (page 152). The 1841 census return for Lydford, in which the enumerator entered exact ages instead of age-bands as instructed, shows that Thomas was then still at Downtown (PRO HO107/232/5 Fo. 9):

Downtown			
Thomas Tapson	*48*	*Farmer*	*Born in Devonshire*
Jane Tapson	*45?*		*Born in Devonshire*
Jane Tapson	*19*		*Born in Devonshire*
Elizabeth Tapson	*16*		*Born in Devonshire*
Mary Tapson	*14*		*Born in Devonshire*
Thomas Tapson	*11*		*Born in Devonshire*
William Tapson	*7*		*Born in Devonshire*
George Tapson	*5*		*Born in Devonshire*

Also included were two *Male Servants*. The two eldest daughters, Maria and Ann, had already left home. The ages of the other children were correctly recorded, but Thomas would have been 47 years old at the time of this census.

Thomas's eldest child, Maria, was 19 years old at the time of her marriage at Coryton:

1 Mar 1837 ***Arthur Hillman*** *of this Parish &*
Maria Tapson *Sojourner of this Parish*
by Banns in the presence of Ebsworthy Tapson & Jean Martyn

Ebsworthy, one of the witnesses, was probably her uncle B#72a, who was at the time living in the parish of Lewtrenchard at Lew Wood, about a mile to the north of Coryton village (page 318). Maria's family is shown in the 1841 census for Coryton (PRO HO107/231/11 Fo. 6):

Eastcott			
Arthur Hillman	*23*	*Slate Quarry Lab.*	*Born in Devonshire*
Maria Hillman	*23*		*Born in Devonshire*
John Hillman	*4*		*Born in Devonshire*
Ann Hillman	*2*		*Born in Devonshire*
Henry Hillman	*1*		*Born in Devonshire*

The children are not included in the 1851 return for Coryton (PRO HO107/1884 Fo. 316):

Coryton Slate Quarry					
Arthur Hillman Jr	*Head*	*Mar*	*33*	*Slate lifter*	*Devon, Coryton*
Maria Hillman	*Wife*	*Mar*	*33*		*„ Lydford*

Her age and place of birth confirm that this Maria was Thomas's daughter. Maria's grandparents George and Mary Tapson both died at Coryton, in 1842 and 1849 respectively (page 155).

Thomas's second daughter was married at Stoke Damerel:

21 Jun 1842 ***William Blatchford*** *Full* *Bachelor* *Farmer*
9 Dock Wall Street *(Father: George Blatchford, Farmer)*
Ann Tapson *Full* *Spinster*
10 Dock Wall Street *(Father: Thomas Tapson, Farmer)*
by Banns in the presence of John Symons & Grace Algar

Ann's birthplace is confirmed by the 1851 census return for Lydford (PRO HO107/1884 Fo. 57), although her age should have been given as 31:

Skitt

William Blatchford	*Head*	*Mar*	*29*	*Miner*	*Tin*	*Devon, Lewtrenchard*
Ann Blatchford	*Wife*	*Mar*	*29*	*„*	*Wife*	*„ Lydford*
William Tapson Blatchford	*Son*		*6*	*„*	*Son*	*„ „*
Elizabeth Blatchford	*Dau*		*3*	*„*	*Dau*	*„ Tavistock*
George Blatchford	*Son*		*1*	*„*	*Son*	*„ Lydford*

Thomas's second son, William, died on 14 November 1842, aged 9 years. On his death certificate* he is described as the *son of Thomas Tapson, Yeoman*, and the cause of death is given as *scarletina*. He was buried at Lydford:

18 Nov 1842 William Tapson *Down Town, Lydford* *10*

Another marriage took place at Stoke Damerel:

19 Aug 1845 ***George Chubb*** *Full* *Bachelor* *Labourer*
10 Barrack Street *(Father: Roger Chubb, Labourer)*
Elizabeth Tapson *Full* *Spinster*
19 Barrack Street *(Father: Thomas Tapson, Labourer)*
by Banns in the presence of ..... Hearn & John Symons

Although both fathers were described as *labourers*, Elizabeth was the daughter of B#71, marrying a son of a another farmer named Roger Chubb; the bride's identity is confirmed by her exact age and her place of birth given in the 1851 census return for Lamerton (PRO HO107/1884 Fo. 75):

Waterfall

George Chubb	*Head*	*Mar*	*29*	*Farmer 28 Acres*	*Devon,*	*Petertavy*
Elizabeth Chubb	*Wife*	*Mar*	*26*		*„*	*Lydford*
William Chubb	*Son*	*Un*	*5*		*„*	*„*
Mary Chubb	*Dau*	*Un*	*3*		*„*	*Lamerton*
Mary Hutchins	*Visitor*	*Un*	*62*	*Annuitant*	*„*	*Oakhampton*
Grace Chubb	*Visitor*	*Wid*	*62*	*Retired from business*	*„*	*„*

Nearly three years after Elizabeth's marriage her sister Mary was married at Lydford to a brother of George Chubb; the marriage entry confirms that Roger Chubb was a farmer:

21 Jul 1848 ***James Chubb*** *24* *Batchelor* *Labourer*
Lydford Village *(Father: Roger Chubb, Farmer)*
Mary Tapson *21*
Downtown *(Father: Thomas Tapson, Farmer)*
in the presence of Thomas Powell & Maria Hillman

Maria Hillman, one of the witnesses, was Mary's eldest sister.

The year before Mary's marriage Jane, the third daughter of Thomas and Jane who had been working in Bridestowe as a servant, married John Turner of Bridestowe, a waggoner, at Bridestowe on 4 October 1847 (page 128). So Thomas's wife, Jane, had seen all her daughters married before she died in 1850; she was buried at Lydford:

4 Apr 1850 Jane Tapson *Downtown, Lydford* *56*

Jane was buried next to her son William, who had died nearly eight years earlier; their graves are close to the south porch of the church.•

*Reported by Mrs. Pauline Johnson, Superintendent Registrar at Tavistock.

•See Appendix VII (Further Addenda)

The inscription on Jane's headstone suggests a long illness:

Sacred to the memory of Jane Tapson Wife of Thomas Tapson of this Parish
Who departed this life the 1st day of April 1850 Aged 56 Years

My husband dear and children too
Now must I bid you all adieu
I hope in Heaven to meet my God
But I must part from you

The days and months in pain and tears
Through troubled paths I trod
My Saviours voice bade me rejoice
And called my Soul to God

Prepare thee partner of my joys and woes
To follow and partake of my repose
As thou hath shar'd my gladness and my gloom
So must thou share with me the silent tomb

Thomas and his two surviving sons were still at Downtown for the 1851 census and his daughter Mary, who had already been widowed, had returned home. The census return for Lydford (PRO HO107/1884 Fo. 58) records the correct ages for Thomas and his children:

Downtown

Thomas Tapson	*Head*	*Widr*	*57*	*Farmer of 130 Acers Emp of Lab*	*Devon,*	*Bridestowe*
Mary Chubb	*Dau*	*Wid*	*24*	*Dau*	*„*	*Lydford*
Thomas Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*21*	*Farmer's son*	*„*	*„*
George Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*15*	*„ „*	*„*	*„*
Richard? Hill	*Servant*	*Un*	*21*	*Farmer's Servant*	*„*	*Bridestowe*
Nancy Palmer	*Servant*	*Un*	*18*	*„ „*	*„*	*Lydford*

Nancy Palmer, Thomas's servant, gave birth to a son who was baptized at Lydford:

19 Mar 1854 William Tapson Base born son of Nancy Palmer, Lydford, Servant

It must be assumed that Thomas was the father of William Tapson Palmer, for soon after this baptism, at the age of 60, he married Nancy, who was still only 22 years old, at the Tavistock Register Office:

18 Apr 1854 ***Thomas Tapson*** *59 Widower Yeoman*
Downtown in Lidford (Father: George Tapson, Farmer)
Nancy Palmer *25 Spinster*
Lidford Town (Father: Charles Palmer, Carpenter)
by Licence in the presence of Grace Richards and Charles Palmer

Nancy's correct age is confirmed by her baptismal entry in the Lydford parish register:

24 *Jul 1831 Nancy dau of Charles & Elizabeth Palmer, Lydford Village, Labourer*

There was another baptism at Lydford just a year after the marriage of Thomas and Nancy:

25 Apr 1855 Caroline dau of Thomas & Nancy Tapson, Lydford, Farmer

It seems that the name *Caroline* was written in the parish register in error for *Catherine*, the name which was registered on the child's birth certificate.

Soon afterwards Thomas and his second family left Downtown; it was probably B#71 who was listed, under *Marystowe*, in BILLINGS DIRECTORY OF DEVON 1857 at Dipperton Farm (Page 166):

Tapson Thomas, farmer, Dipperton

No Tapson was listed at Dipperton in the 1861 census; Thomas had moved to Hurlditch, about a mile north-west of Lamerton village. Two baptisms are recorded in the Lamerton parish register:

11 May 1858 Susanna dau of Thomas & Nancy Tapson, Hurlditch, Farmer
6 Jan 1860 John son of Thomas & Mary Tapson, Hurlditch, Farmer

Susanna's birth had been registered in 1857, Q3. It will be explained later (page 309) how the name of John's mother came to be written in error as *Mary*.•

• John's birth certificate states that he was born at Hurlditch on 15 December 1859, the son of Thomas Tapson, Farmer, and Nancy Tapson, formerly Palmer

The family is shown in the 1861 census return for Lamerton (PRO RG9/1463 Fo. 21):

Hurlditch

Thomas Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*67*	*Farmer of 154 Acres Emp 2 Labourers 2 Boys*	*Devon,*	*Bridestowe*
Nancy Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*32*	*Farmer's Wife*	*„*	*Lydford*
William Tapson	*Son*		*7*	*Scholar*	*„*	*„*
Catherine Tapson	*Dau*		*5*	*„*	*„*	*„*
Susannah Tapson	*Dau*		*3*	*Farmer's Daughter*	*„*	*Lamerton*
John Tapson	*Son*		*1*	*Farmer's Son*	*„*	*„*
Mary Palmer	*Serv*	*Un*	*25*	*House Servant*	*„*	*Lydford*
Emma? Palmer	*Visitor*		*13*		*„*	*„*
John Medland	*Serv*	*Un*	*21*	*Carter*	*„*	*Sourton*
James Northman	*Serv*		*14*	*Carter*	*„*	*Lydford*

Further baptisms followed at Lamerton:

21 Jun 1863 Anna dau of Thomas & Nancy Tapson, Hurlditch, Farmer
29 Apr 1866 James son of Thomas & Nancy Tapson, Hurlditch, Yeoman
23 Aug 1868 Richard son of Thomas & Nancy Tapson, Hurlditch, Farmer
7 Aug 1870 Joseph son of Thomas & Nancy Tapson, Hurlditch, Farmer

Richard was not quite two years old when he died on 10 May 1870; his death certificate* states that he was *accidentally drowned in a well at Hurlditch*.

All the surviving children of Thomas's second family were at home at the time of the 1871 census return for Lamerton (PRO RG10/2148 Fo. 20), and Thomas had increased his holding:

Hurlditch

Thomas Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*78*	*Farmer of 225 Acres Emp 1 Labourer*	*Devon,*	*Bridestowe*
Nancy Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*42*		*„*	*Lydford*
William Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*16*	*Farmer's Son*	*„*	*„*
Catherine Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*15*	*Farmer's Daughter*	*„*	*„*
Susanna Tapson	*Dau*		*13*	*Scholar*	*„*	*Lamerton*
John Tapson	*Son*		*10*	*Farmer's Son*	*„*	*„*
Hannah Tapson	*Dau*		*7*		*„*	*„*
James Tapson	*Son*		*4*	*Scholar*	*„*	*„*
Joseph Tapson	*Son*		*9 mo.*		*„*	*„*
Robert Hortep	*Serv*		*21*	*Farm Servant Indoor*	*„*	*Thrushelton*

The baptism of Thomas's last child is recorded at Lamerton:

12 May 1872 Jehu son of Thomas & Nancy Tapson, Hurlditch, Farmer

Thomas was 78 years old when Jehu's birth was registered in 1872, Q1; he was nevertheless still farming, for his name appears in Kelly's 1873 directory for Devonshire under *Farmers*:

Tapson T. Hurlditch, Lamerton, Tavistock

and he is listed in the 1874 electoral register for the Parish of Lamerton:

Tapson Thomas Lamerton Land as Occupier Hurlditche

However, he was soon to give up his land at Hurlditch, for a move is indicated by his listing in White's 1878-9 directory for Devonshire:

Tapson Thos., Peter Tavy, Tavistock

Although this entry appears under *Farmers*, it is not clear whether he had taken on land at Peter Tavy.

Thomas lived to see the marriages of two of his three daughters by his second marriage: Catherine married John Hart Burgoyne at Plymouth in 1875, Q2, and Susanna married Thomas Petherick, also at Plymouth, in 1881, Q1. His third daughter, Hanna, did not marry until 1886, Q2, nearly four years after Thomas's death; her husband was Philip Henry Rich, and she too was married at Plymouth.

*Reported by Mrs. Pauline Johnson, Superintendent Registrar at Tavistock.

Hannah was still living with her parents and three youngest brothers at the time of the 1881 census return for Peter Tavy (PRO RG11/2219 Fo. 28):

Coombe Cottage

Thomas Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*88*	*Retired Farmer*	*Devon,*	*Bridestowe*
Nancy Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*52*		*„*	*Lydford*
Hannah Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*17*		*„*	*Lamerton*
James Tapson	*Son*		*14*	*Scholar*	*„*	*„*
Joseph Tapson	*Son*		*10*	*„*	*„*	*„*
Jehu Tapson	*Son*		*9*	*„*	*„*	*„*

The Will of Thomas Tapson dated 25 July 1882

This is the last Will and Testament of me Thomas Tapson of S[t] Peter Tavy Devon, retired Farmer. I appoint my Wife Nancy Tapson sole Executrix of this my Will. I give devise and bequeath my household goods & furniture to my said Wife and Executrix Nancy Tapson for her own use absolutely. As to the rest of my property real and personal whatsoever & wheresoever I give devise and bequeath the same with power to convert into money any part which may not be in money to my said Wife & Executrix Nancy Tapson that she may therefrom as she thinks best maintain & provide for my two youngest children Joseph Tapson and Jehu Tapson who are of tender age and unable to get their own livelihood and this without giving account to anyone. In witness whereof I have hereunder set my hand this 25th day of July 1882 *Thomas Tapson*

Thomas died at The Coombe, Peter Tavy, on 30 July 1882, just a few days after making his will. He was 88 years old, although his death certificate, which says that he died of *Natural Decay*, gives his age as 93. He was buried at Lydford in the grave of his son William:

6 Aug 1882 Thomas Tapson Peter-Tavy 93

Thomas's will was proved at Exeter on 30 September 1882, his effects amounting to £60 - 10 - 0.

Nancy died on 16 April 1906 at 1, Church Lane, Tavistock, the home of her second daughter, Susanna Petherick. Her death certificate gives her age as 73 and states that she died of *Hemiplegia* [paralysis on one side, usually caused by a stroke] and *Senile Decay*.•

9.2 GEORGE BLATCHFORD TAPSON OF HOPE, CANADA, FARMER

The marriage of George Blatchford Tapson, the youngest son of Thomas and his first wife, Jane, to Jane Perry was registered in 1857, Q2 (Tavistock R.D.). The Stowford register records (page 164) the baptism on 9 February 1859 of their son, Frank Hope. Jane and her son are included in the 1861 census return (PRO RG9/1464 Fo. 111) for Stowford at the *Royal Oak* inn, the home of Jane's parents and the address given in Frank Hope's baptismal entry:

Royal Oak

Solomon Perry	*Head*	*Mar*	*66*	*Licensed Victualler Farmer of 10 acres employing 1 man*	*Devon,*	*Stowford*
Joanna Perry	*Wife*	*Mar*	*66*		*„*	*Whitchurch*
George Perry	*Son*	*Un*	*42*	*Farmer's Son*	*„*	*Stowford*
Jane B. Tapson	*Dau*	*Mar*	*24*		*„*	*Lifton*
Frank Tapson	*Grandson*		*3*		*Upper Canada Township of Hope*	

Jane obviously went to Canada with her husband, since Frank Hope was born there, but she was in Stowford in February 1859 and still (or again) in April 1861. It is not known if she rejoined her husband in Canada; however, Frank Hope did not marry in England or Wales.•

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

9.3 THOMAS TAPSON OF LAMERTON, AGRICULTURAL LABOURER

The eldest son of Thomas and Jane was nearly 24 years old and living at Waterfall, the address of his sister Elizabeth Chubb (page 305), at the time of his marriage at Lamerton:

25 Oct 1853	***Thomas Tapson***	*24*	*Bachelor*	*Farmer*	*Waterfall*
				(Father: Thomas Tapson, Farmer)	
	Mary Fuge	*26*	*Spinster*		*Hale*
				(Father: Samuel Fuge, Farmer)	

by Banns in the presence of William Fuge & Grace Fuge

The Lamerton register then records the baptisms of the first three children of Thomas and Mary:

4 Jun 1854	*Jane*	*dau of Thomas & Mary Tapson, Waterfall, Farmer*
10 May 1857	*Thomas*	*son of Thomas & Mary Tapson, Forda Mill, Miller*
1 Nov 1859	*Richard Fuge*	*son of Thomas & Mary Tapson, Hurlditch, Farmer*

Most of the family appear in the 1861 census for Lamerton (PRO RG9/1463 Fo. 20):

Hurlditch					
Thomas Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*30*	*Farm Labourer*	*Devon, Lydford*
Mary Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*33*		*„ Petertavy*
Thomas Tapson	*Son*		*3*		*„ Lamerton*
Richard Tapson	*Son*		*1*		*„ „*

Jane, however, was missing; she was staying with her maternal grandfather on his farm in Lamerton, with two of her aunts and two of her cousins (PRO RG9/1463 Fo. 5):

Holl Farm					
Samuel Fuge	*Head*	*Widr*	*75*	*Farmer 150 acres*	*Devon, Petertavy*
Betsy Fuge	*Dau*	*Un*	*25*	*Housekeeper*	*„ „*
Jane Tapson	*Gran Dau*	*Un*	*6*	*Scholar*	*„ Lamerton*
Grace Hill	*Visitor*	*Mar*	*27*	*Dress Maker*	*„ Sourton*
James Hill	*Gran Son*		*2*		*„ „*
Grace Hill	*Gran Dau*		*3 mo.*		*„ Petertavy*

Thomas was living at Hurlditch (perhaps working for his father) when Richard Fuge was baptized and also when the census was held; so it is perhaps an understandable error on the part of the cleric who conducted the baptism that the next Tapson entry in the Lamerton register should be:

6 Jan 1860 John *son of Thomas & Mary Tapson, Hurlditch, Farmer*

Coming only two months after the baptism of Richard Fuge this is unlikely, especially since Richard is known from his birth certificate to have been born on 17 October 1859. It is clear that John was the son of Thomas's father and step-mother, Thomas and Nancy, and this is borne out by his inclusion in their household in the 1861 and 1871 census returns (page 307). However, the following entries in the Lamerton register are correct:

1 Feb 1863	*Grace Fuge*	*dau of Thomas & Mary Tapson, Chaddlehanger, Labourer*
22 Jul 1866	*Albert*	*son of Thomas & Mary Tapson, Chaddlehanger, Labourer*
9 May 1869	*Sam*	*son of Thomas & Mary Tapson, Lamerton, Labourer*

The hamlet of Chaddlehanger is about a mile north-east of Lamerton village.

The 1871 census for Lamerton (PRO RG10/2148 Fo. 42) does not include Jane:

Lamerton Green					
Thomas Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*43*	*Ag Lab*	*Devon, Lydford*
Mary Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*42*		*„ Petertavy*
Thomas Tapson	*Son*		*13*	*Scholar*	*„ Lamerton*
Richard Tapson	*Son*		*11*	*„*	*„ „*
Grace Tapson	*Dau*		*8*	*„*	*„ „*
Albert Tapson	*Son*		*4*	*„*	*„ „*
Sam Tapson	*Son*		*1*		*„ „*
Elizabeth Chubb	*Visitor*	*Un*	*20*	*Farmer's Daughter*	*„ „*

The eldest child of Thomas and Mary, who was not at home at the time of the 1871 census, would have been 23 years old when the marriage was registered (Tavistock R.D.) in 1877, Q4, of a *Jane Tapson*; the marriage certificate would be required to determine for certain whether the bride was the daughter of Thomas and Mary.•

The death of Thomas's wife, Mary, had been registered in 1875, Q1 (Tavistock R.D.); her age was given as 45, which is reasonably consistent with the ages given for her in the 1861 and 1871 census returns.

The 1881 census return for Lamerton shows a much-reduced household for Thomas (PRO RG11/2220 Fo. 38):

Lamerton Green

Thomas Tapson	*Head*	*Widr*	*51*	*Farm laborer*	*Devon, Lydford*
Ann Walters	*House -keeper*	*Wid*	*53*	*Housekeeper*	*„ Broadwood -widger*
Richard F. Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*21*	*Farm laborer*	*„ Lamerton*
Sam Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*11*	*Scholar*	*„ „*

Thomas's eldest son, although he had left home, had not moved far; for he was included, living alone in the School House, in the 1881 census return (PRO RG11/2218 Fo. 104) for Lydford, his father's birthplace:

School House

Thomas Tapson	*Head*	*Un*	*23*	*Elementary Teacher*	*Devon, Lamerton*

Less than a year later Thomas was dead: his death certificate states that he died on 7 January 1882 at Princetown, Lydford, of *Acute Rheumatism Endocarditis and Pericarditis*; his age was correctly recorded as 24, and his occupation was given as *Schoolmaster*. [Endocarditis and Pericarditis are infections of the inner and outer linings, respectively, of the heart.]

The 1881 census return for Buckland Monachorum (PRO RG11/2218 Fo. 59) shows a Tapson once again living in that parish — Thomas's daughter Grace Fuge:

Harrowbeer Farm Ho.

Henry Willis	*Head*	*Mar*	*69*	*Farmer of 29 Acres employing 1 boy*	*Scotland*
Elizabeth Willis	*Wife*	*Mar*	*69*	*Farmer's Wife*	*„*
Grace Tapson	*Servant*	*Un*	*18*	*Farmer's Serv Domestic*	*Devon, Lamerton*
Charles Rament	*Servant*	*Un*	*18*	*General Farm Servant*	*„ „*

Harrowbeer is just over two miles to the east of Buckland Monachorum village, on the eastern side of Roborough Down. On 4 October 1884 Grace Fuge married William Charles Leggo at Madron, near Penzance in S. W. Cornwall.

Although only 14, Albert was also working away from home in 1881; the census return of that year for Tavistock (PRO RG11/2217 Fo. 28) includes him, together with two other male servants and a female servant, living with a farmer and his family:

Down House Farm

John Solomon Skinner	*Head*	*Mar*	*51*	*Butcher and Farmer of 207 Acres employing 5 men & 1 boy*	*Devon, Tavistock*
.....					
.....					
Albert Tapson	*Serv*	*Un*	*14*	*Farm Servant*	*„ Lamerton*

Thomas's death was registered in 1888, Q3 (Tavistock R.D.); he was nearly 59 years old, the age recorded on his death certificate.•

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

9.4 WILLIAM PALMER TAPSON OF TAVISTOCK, GARDENER

After the marriage of Thomas B#71 and his servant girl Nancy Palmer (page 306), their illegitimate son, William Tapson Palmer, seems to have used the name William Tapson or, occasionally, the name William Palmer Tapson. This William would have been 20 years old at the time of his marriage to Ellen Pellow in 1874, Q3 (Plymouth R.D.). The Lamerton parish register records the baptism of their first child:

25 Apr 1875 Mabel Ellen dau of William & Ellen Tapson, Lamerton, Miner

Their second child, Beatrice Kate, was born on 10 July 1877; she died on 5 November 1879, of *sudden convulsions* at Vigo Bridge, Tavistock, aged 2 years.*

Details of the births of the next two children come from their birth certificates:*

NAME OF CHILD	DATE OF BIRTH	NAME OF FATHER	NAME OF MOTHER	ADDRESS
Francis Horwin	*6 May 1879*	*William Palmer Tapson, Gardener*	*Ellen Tapson, formerly Pellow*	*5 Dolvin Road, Tavistock*
Laura Angelina	*7 Oct 1880*	*William Tapson Gardener*	*Ellen Tapson, formerly Pellow*	*5 Dolvin Road Tavistock*

Francis Horwin died at Vigo Bridge of *pneumonia* on 8 November 1879, just three days after the death of his sister Beatrice Kate; he was six months old.* (Dolvin Road leads off to the west from Vigo Bridge; either address seems to have been used for the same house.)

William and Ellen, with their two surviving children, appear at a new address in the 1881 census for Tavistock (PRO RG11/2217 Fo. 63):

5 Vigo Bridge

William Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*27*	*Garden Laborer*	*Devon, Lidford*
Ellen Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*29*		*„ Lamerton*
Mabel Tapson	*Dau*		*6*	*Scholar*	*„ „*
Laura Angelina Tapson	*Dau*		*5 mo.*		*„ Tavistock*

The birth of Charles Montague was registered in 1882, Q4 (Tavistock R.D.); details of the next three children come from their birth certificates:*

Bertram Gilson	*30 Apr 1885*	*William Tapson Gardener*	*Ellen Tapson, formerly Pellow*	*The Village Peter Tavy*
Alice Maud	*19 Aug 1887*	*William Tapson General Labourer*	*Ellen Tapson formerly Pellow*	*27 Kilworthy Tavistock*
William Frederick	*13 Jul 1889*	*William Tapson Gardener*	*Ellen Tapson formerly Pellow*	*27 Kilworthy Tavistock*

The family were still at Kilworthy Lane for the 1891 census (PRO RG12/1749 Fo. 85):

2 Kilworthy Lane

William Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*37*	*Gardener Ostler*	*Devon, Lydford*
Ellen Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*40*		*„ Lamerton*
Mabel E. Tapson	*Dau*		*16*		*„ „*
Laura A. Tapson	*Dau*		*10*	*Scholar*	*„ Tavistock*
Charles M. Tapson	*Son*		*8*	*„*	*„ St PeterTavy*
Bertram G. Tapson	*Son*		*5*	*„*	*„ „ „ „*
Alice M. Tapson	*Dau*		*3*	*„*	*„ Tavistock*
Frederick W. Tapson	*Son*		*1*		*„ „*

William died on 17 June 1909;• his death certificate, which gives his age correctly as 55 years, states that he was a *Gardener (Jobbing)* of *17 Market Street, Tavistock*, and died of *Erysipelas* [before penicillin an often-fatal bacterial infection of the skin], *Bronchitis* and *Hyperpyrexia* [extemely high temperature] which lasted for *5 days*. The death of William's widow, Ellen, was registered in 1918, Q1 (Devonport R.D.); the age given, 67 years, is consistent with that recorded in the 1891 census.

*Reported by Mrs. Pauline Johnson, Superintendent Registrar at Tavistock.

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

9.5 JOHN TAPSON OF HAMMERSMITH, POLICEMAN

John, the second son of Thomas and Nancy, was probably not quite 20 years old at the time of his marriage at Peter Tavy:

13 Oct 1879 ***John Tapson*** *20* *Bachelor* *Butcher*
St. Peter Tavy *(Father: Thomas Tapson, Farmer)*
Maria Geake *22* *Spinster*
St. Peter Tavy *(Father: Walter Geake, Miner)*
by Banns in the presence of John Carter & Emma Rowe

Ethel Maria, the first child of John and Maria, was born on 1 March 1880 and baptized at Peter Tavy on 5 May 1880.*

John and Maria, with their baby daughter, then headed for west London, where they are found in the 1881 census return for Hammersmith (PRO RG11/57 Fo. 114):

82 Brackenbury Rd

John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*22*	*Police Constable*	*Devon, Lamerton*
Maria Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*24*		*„ Petertavy*
Ethel M. Tapson	*Dau*		*1*		*„ „*

The births were subsequently registered (Fulham R.D.) of Louisa Maude in 1882, Q2 (died 1882, Q4) and of Walter John, no doubt named after Maria's father, in 1885, Q4 (died 1885, Q4). The death of Maria too, presumably during or soon after childbirth, was registered in 1885, Q4; her age, recorded as 29 years, is reasonably consistent with that given in the marriage entry at Peter Tavy.

John's second marriage was registered (Fulham R.D.) in 1887, Q2; this was followed by the birth of Arthur John in 1888, Q1. The death of Arthur John was registered (Fulham R.D.) in 1890, Q1, his age being given as 2 years. The following year, in 1891, Q4, the death was registered of John himself; he would have been about 32 years old, the age recorded.●

9.6 JAMES TAPSON OF CHISWICK & PLYMOUTH, BAKER

The third son of Thomas and Nancy followed his brother John to west London, where he was married at St. John the Evangelist, the parish church of Hammersmith (in the Fulham R.D.):

22 Dec 1889 ***James Tapson*** *23* *Bachelor* *Butcher*
20 Coulter Road *(Father: Thomas Tapson, Farmer)*
Harriet Tacon *24* *Spinster*
20 Coulter Road *(Father: Robert Tacon, Warehouseman)*
by Banns in the presence of Joseph Tapson & .....?

James and Harriet had eight children:

James	birth registered	1890, Q3 (Fulham R.D.)	
Thomas		1891, Q4 (Norwich R.D.)	
Florence Katherine		1894, Q1 (Brentford R.D.)	(born 28 Nov 1893*)
Mabel Harriet		1895, Q1 (Brentford R.D.)	(born 20 Feb 1895*)
Alfred		1896, Q4 (Brentford R.D.)	(born 25 Nov 1896*)
Dorothy Ellen		1898, Q4 (Brentford R.D.)	(born 14 Nov 1898*)
Richard William		1903, Q1 (Devonport R.D.)	(born 13 Dec 1902*)
Violet Jessie		1905, Q1 (Devonport R.D.)	(born 5 Jan 1905*)

Norwich, where Thomas's birth was registered, had been Harriet's home, to which she returned from time to time to visit her family.* James and Harriet were settled in Chiswick* (in the Brentford R.D.) by the time Florence Katherine was born.● They subsequently returned to Devon and, although he was recorded in his marriage entry as a butcher, James established a bakery business at Maristow Avenue, Keyham, Devonport, which also became the family home.*

*Information supplied by Ursula Tapson, wife of a descendant of B#71.

● See Appendix VI (Addenda)

The Will of James Tapson dated 4 April 1923

This is the last Will and Testament of me James Tapson of Nº 20 Maristow Avenue Keyham Devonport Baker I give and bequeath to my son James Tapson the sum of two hundred pounds and to my son Alfred the sum of sixty pounds being the amounts advanced by them to me All the rest residue and remainder of my estate ..... I give devise and bequeath to my wife Harriett Tapson absolutely I appoint my said wife sole Executrix of this my will ..... In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand this fourth day of April one thousand nine hundred and twenty three *James Tapson*

James died at 20 Maristow Avenue on 14 June 1933 and was buried at Weston Mill Cemetery.* His estate was valued at £60 - 8 - 0 when probate was granted on 8 July 1833. Harriet, his widow, returned to the London area to live with her youngest daughter; she died (Croydon RD) on 2 July 1944, but her body was brought back to Plymouth for burial at Weston Mill Cemetery.*

9.7 JOSEPH TAPSON OF HAMMERSMITH, FURNITURE REMOVER

Joseph also made for west London. He was actually 19 years old when he married in the parish church of Kensington:

8 Mar 1890 ***Joseph Tapson*** *21 Bachelor Baker*
21 Church St, Kensington *(Father: Thomas Tapson deceased, Farmer)*
Charlotte Annie
Walter Marian Harford *20 Spinster*
.....?..... *(Father: .....?..... Harford, ...?.....)*
by Banns in the presence of Eliza Rice & Emma Judd

The following births were registered; while some slight doubt remains about the two children who died young, the others are known to be the children of Joseph and Charlotte Annie:

Joseph Walter	1891, Q2 (Fulham R.D.)
Alice Kate	1892, Q4 (Kensington R.D.)
Henry John	1895, Q2 (Fulham R.D.)
Ethel Maud	1896, Q2 (Fulham R.D.)
Esther Florence M.	1898, Q2 (Fulham R.D.)
Reginald Thomas V.	1900, Q2 (Fulham R.D.) died 1902, Q1 (Fulham RD)
Walter Leonard	1902, Q2 (Fulham R.D.)
Earle	1904, Q3 (Fulham R.D.)
Emily Susannah	1906, Q3 (Fulham R.D.)
Nora Annie M.	1909, Q1 (Fulham R.D.) died 1916, Q2 (Hammersmith R.D.)
Christabel	1910, Q1 (Fulham R.D.)
Rosalind D.	1912, Q1 (Fulham R.D.)

The death of *Joseph W. Tapson* was registered in 1930, Q1 (Hammersmith R.D.), his age being given as 59, the exact age, at the time, of Thomas's son Joseph. It is believed that he died on 23 January 1930.* Joseph had dealt in secondhand furniture, running a warehousing and removals business which was regularly listed in the London, Northern Suburbs, directories from at least 1900:

Tapson Joseph, furniture remover, 55 Dalling road, Hammersmith W

Joseph later moved to 71 Dalling Road, but his business continued to be listed up to 1931, the year after his death; it was then taken over by his son Earle whose name first appears in the 1933 directory:

Tapson Earle, furniture remover, 71 Dalling rd Hammersmith W6

During the war the business remained open; it was listed in Kelly's 1940 and 1945 London directories:

Tapson Annie (Mrs), furniture remover, 71 Dalling rd Hammersmith W6 Riverside 4489

Mrs Annie Tapson may have been Joseph's widow, whose second name was Annie: the death was registered (Hammersmith RD) of *Annie C. Tapson, aged 76* in 1946, Q1.•

*Information supplied by Ursula Tapson, wife of a descendant of B#71.
•See Appendix VI (Addenda).

9.8 JEHU TAPSON, ROYAL NAVY, STOKER

The youngest son of Thomas and Nancy joined the Royal Navy when he was 18 years old; he was born on 25 January 1872,* but in the *Register of Seamen's Services* (PRO ADM188/224), which gives details of his service record, his date of birth is entered as 25 January 1871:

Name	Date of Birth	Place of Birth	Date and Period of C.S. Engagement
Jehu Tapson	25 Jan 1871	Tavistock	29 Apr 1890, 12 years, 8 Jul 1902, To Compl

Height	Hair	Eyes	Complexion	Occupation
5 2½	L. Brown	L. Blue	Fresh	Blacksmith's Mate

Ship Served in	Rating								
Indus	Sto 2C	29	Apr	90	—	3	Jan	91	
Anson	,,	4	Jan	91	—	13	Feb	91	
Curlew	,,	14	Feb	91					
,,	Sto	22	May	91	—	6	May	92	
Vivid II	,,	7	May	92	—	3	Mar	94	
Blanche	,,	4	Mar	94	—	28	Aug	94	
Barrosa	,,	29	Aug	94	—	3	Sep	97	
Vivid II	,,	4	Sep	97	—	1	Nov	98	
Thunderer	,,	2	Nov	98	—	9	Nov	98	
Vivid II	,,	10	Nov	98	—	28	Feb	99	
Thunderer	,,	1	Mar	99					
,,	Ldg Sto 2C	26	Jun	99	—	15	Oct	99	
Vivid II	,,	16	Oct	99	—	18	Apr	00	
Charybdis	,,	19	Apr	00	—	2	May	02	
Vivid	,,	3	May	02	—	17	Sep	02	
Isis	,,	18	Sep	02					
,,	Ldg Sto 1C	19	Mar	03					
,,	Stoker	9	Jun	03	—	25	Jul	04	
Defiance	,,	26	Jul	04	—	20	Aug	04	
Isis	,,	21	Aug	04	—	8	Jan	06	
Vivid II	,,	9	Jan	06	—	16	Jan	06	
Defiance	,,	17	Jan	06					
,,	Sto 1C	1	Jul	06	—	5	Jan	08	
Vivid II	,,	6	Jan	08	—	27	Jul	08	
Forth	,,	28	Jul	08	—	20	Nov	08	
Vivid II	,,	21	Nov	08	—	11	Jan	09	
Royal Arthur	,,	12	Jan	09	—	26	Jan	09	
Orion	,,	27	Jan	09	—	20	Dec	09	
Orontes	,,	21	Dec	09	—	10	Feb	11	
Talbot	,,	11	Feb	11	—	7	Mar	11	
Vivid II	,,	8	Mar	11	—	3	Apr	11	
Leander	,,	4	Apr	11	—	20	Jan	12	
Vivid II	,,	21	Jan	12	—	1	May	12	
Vivid II	Sto 1C (6 years)	2	Aug	14	—	4	Dec	16	
Ringdove	,,	5	Dec	16	—	31	Jul	18	
Vivid II	,,	1	Aug	18	—	31	Dec	18	
,,	,,	1	Jan	19	—	30	Jun	19	
,, III	,,	1	Jul	19	—	14	Oct	19	Demob[d]
Vivid I	A. B.	12	May	21	—	19	Jun	22	

After demobilization Jehu, who had not married, went to live with his brother James at 20 Maristow Avenue. He died intestate on 9 January 1932; administration of his estate, valued at £277 - 10 - 0 gross, was granted to his sister Susanna Petherick (page 307) of 14 Chapel Street, Tavistock.

*Information supplied by Ursula Tapson, wife of a descendant of B#71.

9.9 WILLIAM TAPSON OF SHAUGH PRIOR, FARMER (B#72)•

The third son of George B#47 was married in the parish of Shaugh Prior. Shaugh village, to the north-east of Plymouth, sits on a shoulder of Dartmoor overlooking the Plym valley:

1 Nov 1819 ***William Tapson*** *Sojourner of this Parish &* ***Mary Damerell*** *of this Parish*
by Banns in the presence of Robert Damerell & Robert Andrews

The first four children of William and Mary were baptized at Shaugh Prior:

29 Apr 1821 Maria — *dau of William & Mary Tapson, Purps, Husbandman*
22 Jun 1823 John — *son of William & Mary Tapson, Fonstone, Husbandman*
15 Jan 1826 Mary Ann — *dau of William & Mary Tapson, Fonstone, Husbandman*
2 Nov 1828 William — *son of William & Mary Tapson, Fonstone, Husbandman*

Purps Farm is just to the south of Shaugh village; *Faunstone* is farther south, beyond Purps.

The family then moved to Harford, about six miles south-east of Shaugh village, where another daughter was baptized:

18 Mar 1832 Elizabeth — *dau of William & Mary Tapson, Fountains-Land, Farmer*

William was back in Shaugh for the 1841 census, again living at Faunstone (PRO HO107/239/4 Fo. 6):

Faunson

William Tapson	*45*	*Ag Lab*	*Born in Devonshire*
Elizabeth Tapson	*9*		*Born in Devonshire*

By 1851 William and his wife had moved once more, this time some 10 miles to the south-east of Shaugh village, beyond Harford, to Ugborough, where they are included in the 1851 census return (PRO HO107/1874 Fo. 456) for that parish:

North Fillham

William Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*56*	*Farmer 18 acres 1 labourer*	*Devon, Bridestowe*
Mary Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*50*	*Farmer's Wife*	*„ Shaugh*

William B#72, whose age was given accurately in 1841, would have been in his 56th year at the time of this census. And he would have been nearly 62 years old when he died; he was buried at Shaugh:

7 Oct 1857 William Tapson — *Crabtree, Egg Buckland* — *62*

In 1851 Elizabeth had been working in London as a servant to a family with Harford connections; she appears in the return for Kensington (PRO HO107/1469 Fo. 255):

46 Brompton Crescent

Creasy Ewing	*Head*	*Mar*	*48*	*Attorney*	*Sussex, Brighton*
Caroline Ewing	*Wife*	*Mar*	*39*		*Devon, Harford*
Mary Ewing	*Dau*		*14*		*Middx, Clerkenwell*
Paul Ewing	*Son*		*3*		*„ „*
Sarah Collard	*Serv*	*Un*	*25*		*Surrey, St. Olaves*
Mary Ann Payne	*Serv*	*Un*	*21*		*Middx, Islington*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Serv*	*Un*	*20*		*Devon, Harford*

Elizabeth was married at the church of Charles the Martyr, Plymouth:

7 Sep 1862 ***Richard Northmore*** *Full* — *Widower* — *Labourer*
3 Ebrington Street — *(Father: William Northmore, Farmer)*
Elizabeth Tapson *Full* — *Spinster*
3 Ebrington Street — *(Father: William Tapson, Farmer)*
by Banns in the presence of Mary Ann Luxon & R. Evens•

Mary survived her husband by more than twenty years; she was buried at Ford Park:

23 Feb 1878 Mary Tapson — *7 Albert Road, Plymouth* — *76*

Her headstone inscription says that she was the *wife of William, late of Shaugh*, and that she died on 19 February 1878. Buried in the same grave were Elizabeth, *wife of Richard Northmore*, who died on 8 May 1912, and their daughter Helena Mary, who died on 16 March 1932.*

*Devon Family History Society: Monumental Inscriptions.

•See Appendix VI (Addenda).

9.10 JOHN TAPSON OF PLYMOUTH, DAIRYMAN & FARMER

William's son John was 27 when he married in the church of St. Andrew, Plymouth:

14 Mar 1851 ***John Tapson*** *27* *Bachelor* *Fisherman*
19 New Street *(Father: William Tapson, Farmer)*
Emma Drew *30* *Spinster*
14 York Street *(Father: John Drew, Farmer)*
by Banns in the presence of Sarah Thomas & William Peter Henry White

Two weeks after the wedding John and Emma were included in the 1851 census return for the parish of St. Andrew, Plymouth (PRO HO107/1879 Fo. 786):

25 Southside Street

John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*27*	*Fishmerchant*	*Devon, Shaugh*
Emma Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*30*		*„ Ugborough*

The birth of their first child, Mary Elizabeth, was not registered; that of John Drew was registered in 1853, Q4 (Plymouth R.D.). There followed three burials at Ford Park Cemetery:

12 Aug 1855	*Mary Elizabeth Tapson*	*New St. Plymouth*	*4*
10 Aug 1856	*John Drew Tapson*	*New St. Plymouth*	*2*
26 Oct 1856	*Emma Tapson*	*New St. Plymouth*	*36*

His wife and their two children dead, John remarried at Charles the Martyr, Plymouth:

8 Apr 1857 ***John Tapson*** *Full* *Widower* *Furze Dealer*
3 Bedford Place *(Father: William Tapson, Farmer)*
Ann Penn *Full* *Widow*
3 Bedford Place *(Father: Pearce Jeffery, Farmer)*
by Banns in the presence of John Doidge & Betsey Bowden

The Three Towns' Directories for 1860 and 1862 show that John's occupation had changed once again:

Tapson John, dairyman, 2 Britonside

And this was his address in the 1861 census return for Plymouth (PRO RG9/1435 Fo. 101):

2 Briton Side

John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*38*	*Dairyman (emp. 2 men)*	*Devon, Shaugh*
Ann Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*50*		*„ Bickleigh*
Elizabeth A. Gould	*Serv*	*Un*	*15*	*General Serv*	*„ Plymouth*

Kelly's 1866 directory, under *Plymouth — Farmers*, reveals yet another change:

Tapson John, Mutley, Weston Peverell, Plymouth

John was still farming at the time of the 1871 census return for Pennycross (PRO RG10/2109 Fo. 94):

Mutley Lodge Farm

John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*47*	*Farming 20 acres emp. 1 Labourer*	*Devon, Shaugh*
Ann Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*60*		*„ Bickleigh*
Mary Tapson	*Mother*	*Wid*	*70*		*„ Shaugh*
Elizabeth Maddock	*Visitor*	*Wid*	*55*		*„ „*

Pennycross is an alternative name for Weston Peverell. Kelly again lists John under *Farmers* in 1873:

Tapson John, Mutley, Compton Gifford, Plymouth

and he is included in the 1878 electoral register for the *Tything of Weston Peverell*:

Tapson John *Mutley Cottage* *Land as Occupier*

However, during the preparation of the electoral register John had moved back into Plymouth, where he had died. His exact age was recorded in the register of Ford Park Cemetery:

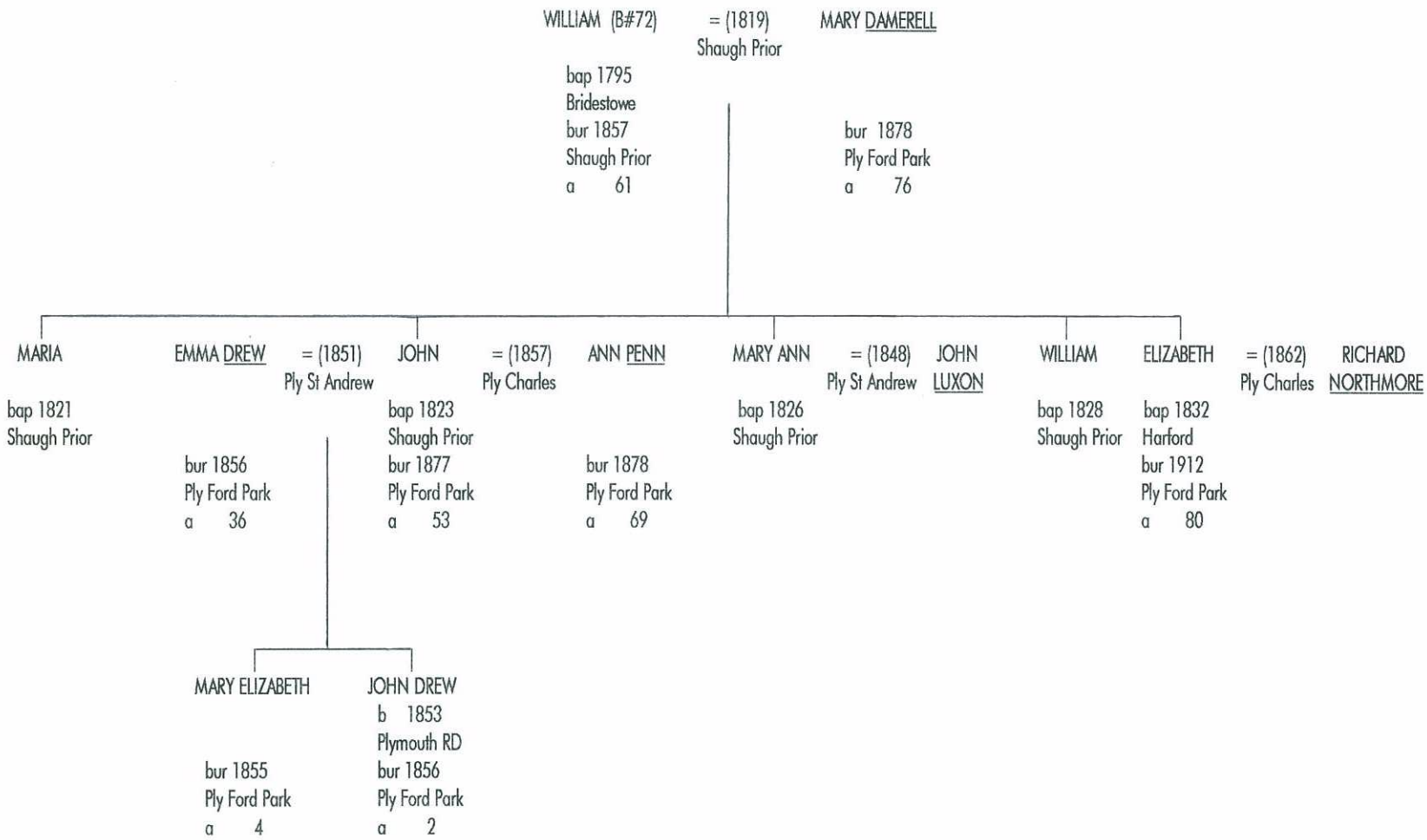
8 Feb 1877 John Tapson *65 York St., Plymouth* *53*

White's 1878-9 directory, also in preparation before John's death, gives the same address:

Tapson John, dairyman & greengrocer, 65 York st

John's widow died the following year; she too was buried at Ford Park Cemetery:

18 Aug 1878 Ann Tapson *40 St. Andrews Street, Plymouth* *69*



DESCENDANTS OF WILLIAM TAPSON OF SHAUGH PRIOR (B#72)

9.11 EBSWORTHY TAPSON OF LEWTRENCHARD, MINER (B#72A)

The fourth son of George Tapson B#47 was 25 years old when he married in the parish church of Lewtrenchard:

2 Oct 1822 ***Ebsworthy Tapson*** *Sojourner of this Parish Bachelor &*
Mary Friend *Sojourner of this Parish Spinster*
by Banns in the presence of Ralph Slays & William Harris

The Stowford register (page 164) records the baptism, on 16 March 1823, of James Mason, *son of Ebsworthy & Mary Tapson, Lewtrenchard, Labourer*; the villages of Stowford and Lewtrenchard are less than two miles apart. The only daughter of Ebsworthy and Mary was baptized at Coryton, the parish immediately to the south of Lewtrenchard parish:

15 Oct 1825 Selina *dau of Ebsworthy & Mary Tapson, West Coryhill, Miner*

Three more sons were baptized at Lewtrenchard:

24 Jun 1827 William *son of Ebsworthy & Mary Tapson, Lew Wood, Labourer*
15 Feb 1829 Robert *son of Ebsworthy & Mary Tapson, Lew Wood, Labourer*
25 Dec 1830 Ebsworthy *son of Ebsworthy & Mary Tapson, Lew Wood, Miner*

Lew Wood is on steeply rising ground to the south of Lewtrenchard village. And the Lewtrenchard register records the burials:

18 Aug 1829	*Selina Tapson*	*Lew Wood*	*4 years*
11 Nov 1831	*Robert Tapson*	*Lew Wood*	*2 years*

The three surviving children are shown in the 1841 census return for Lewtrenchard (PRO HO107/232/4 Fo. 7):

Lew Wood Cottage

Ebsworthy Tapson	*43*	*Manganese Miner*	*Born in Devonshire*
Mary Tapson	*44*		*Born in Devonshire*
James Tapson	*18*		*Born in Devonshire*
William Tapson	*13*		*Born in Devonshire*
Ebsworthy Tapson	*10*		*Born in Devonshire*

Ebsworthy would have been 44 years old at the time of this census, in which the enumerator, conveniently for us, ignored instructions to give only age-bands except for children under the age of 15. The ages of the children were accurately recorded.

By 1861 Ebsworthy and Mary were living at Calstock, in Cornwall, where they are included in the census return for that parish (PRO RG9/1461 Fo. 107):

Albaston

Ebsworthy Tapson	*Head*	*63*	*Copper Miner*			*Devon, Lydford*
Mary Tapson	*Wife*	*64*	*„*	*„*	*Wife*	*„* *„*

Ebsworthy's place of birth given here confirms that he was a son of George B#47, though he would have had his 64th birthday a few weeks before the census was taken. The hamlet of Albaston is about 1½ miles to the north-west of Calstock village; it is one of the communities which grew up rapidly during the Nineteenth-Century boom in the Tamar Valley mining industry (page 282), the most important of these communities in Calstock parish being nearby Gunnislake.

Ebsworthy and Mary returned to Lewtrenchard, where Ebsworthy died in 1869 and Mary the following year. Ebsworthy's death certificate* states that he died on 31 July 1869 at Lew Quarry, Lewtrenchard, of *Hepatic abscess*, aged 73. That for Mary states that she was the *widow of Ebsworthy Tapson, a miner*, and that she died on 9 April 1870 at Lew Quarry, Lewtrenchard, of *Chronic Bronchitis*, aged 75. Ebsworthy would have been in his 73rd year when he died. Both he and Mary were buried at Lewtrenchard:

2 Aug 1869	*Ebsworthy Tapson*	*Lew Trenchard*	*76*
15 Apr 1870	*Mary Tapson*	*Lew Trenchard*	*74*

*Reported by Mrs. Pauline Johnson, Superintendent Registrar at Tavistock.

9.12 JAMES MASON TAPSON OF GLOUCESTER, MINER & AGENT

James Mason Tapson, the eldest son of Ebsworthy and Mary, was 24 years old when his marriage to Susanna Millman was registered in 1847, Q4 (East Stonehouse R.D.). The register of the church of St. George, the only parish church in East Stonehouse R.D. at that time (page 150), was destroyed during World War II. The 1851 census return for Calstock (PRO HO107/1901 Fo. 105) shows James Mason and Susanna living in the same hamlet in which James Mason's parents were living ten years later:

Albaston

James Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*29*	*Tin Miner*	*Devon, Lewtrenchard*
Susana Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*28*		*„ „*
Susan Millman	*Visitor*	*Un*	*5*	*Scholar*	*„ Lidford*

By 1861 James and Susanna had moved to St Ann's Chapel, another mining community close to Albaston, where they were included in the census return for Calstock (PRO RG9/1461 Fo. 118):

James Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*38*	*Miner*	*Devon, Lewtrenchard*
Susanna Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*38*	*„ Wife*	*„ „*

The 1871 census (PRO RG10/2622 Fo. 70) finds James Mason and Susanna living at Barton St. Mary, Gloucester :

Brook St.

J. M. Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*48*	*?Sulphur Tea Sampler*	*Devon, Lewtrenchard*
Susanna Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*48*	*„ Wife*	*„ „*

The Will of James Mason Tapson dated 8 July 1872

This is the last Will and Testament of me James Mason Tapson of Brook Streeet in the Hamlet of Barton Saint Mary near the City but in the County of Gloucester Agent ..... I give and bequeath unto my Wife Susanna Tapson All my personal estate and effects ..... And I appoint my said Wife sole Executrix of my said Will ..... In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand this eighth day of July one thousand eight hundred and seventy two *James Mason Tapson*

James Mason Tapson died at Brook Street, Barton Saint Mary, on 20 July 1872, aged 49. His will was proved on 21 September 1872, his estate being valued at *under £100*. His widow, Susanna, returned to Devon, where she died at Okehampton on 1 March 1881. Her death certificate gives her age as 57, which is consistent with the census returns. Susanna died intestate. Letters of Administration dated 2 April 1881 describe her as *Susanna Tapson late of Okehampton ..... a Widow without Child or Parent*. Administration was granted to *William Millman of Okehampton aforesaid Carpenter, the natural and lawful Brother*, and sureties were named as *Henry Millman of N° 50 Landford Street in the City of Exeter, Joiner and William John Millman of N° 5 Compton Place, S^t^ Mary Church, in the County of Devon, Plumber*. Susanna's effects were valued at *under £300*.

9.13 WILLIAM TAPSON, ROYAL NAVY, QUARTER MASTER

The second son of Ebsworthy and Mary became a seaman. Although he spent some time on merchant ships, he made his career in the Royal Navy; this is detailed in his Continuous Service Record (PRO ADM139/16 No. 1580), which dates from 1853 when continuous service engagements were first introduced:

Duke of Wellington *1 July 1853*

William Tapson *Born: Lewtrenchard, Devon* *12 June 1827*
Height: 5 feet 5½ inches *Complexion: Fair* *Hair: Brown* *Eyes: Blue*
Marks: Cross & Anchor on right arm
Ship entered: Duke of Wellington *30 June 1853* *Rating: A. B.*
Date of Volunteering: *1 July 1853* *Period: 10 years*

Former Service:

Canopus	*24*	*Jul*	*46*	—	*30*	*May*	*48*
St. Vincent	*21*	*Jun*	*48*	—	*19*	*Apr*	*49*
Queen	*20*	*Apr*	*49*	—	*24*	*Jun*	*52*
Geyser	*30*	*Aug*	*52*	—	*17*	*Jun*	*53*
Merchant Ships			*9 Years about.*				

Character	*Ship*	*Entry*	*Rating*	*Discharge*	*Time of Service* Years	Days
TIME PER ANNEXED TRACE					*7*	*298*
	D. of Wellington	*1 Jul 53*	*A. B.*	*13 Jul 53*		
	„	*14 Jul 53*	*Lg Seaman*	*31 Jan 56*		
Good	*„*	*1 Feb 56*	*A. B.*	*4 Apr 57*		
V. Good	*Vesuvius*	*5 Apr 57*	*„*	*14 Jul 57*	*5*	*102*
„	*Boscawen*	*15 Jul 57*	*„*	*7 Mar 58*		
	Vesuvius	*8 Mar 58*	*„*	*31 May 58*		
	„	*1 Jun 58*	*Lg Seaman*	*9 Oct 58*		
Good	*„*	*10 Oct 58*	*Qr Mr*	*22 Feb 60*		
V. Good	*Impregnable*	*23 Feb 60*	*„*	*24 Jul 60*	*5*	*63*
V. Good	*R[l] Adelaide*	*25 Jul 60*	*„*	*31 Dec 61*		
„	*Impregnable*	*1 Jan 62*	*„*	*10 Dec 63*		
					18	*98*

A further section indicates that, whilst serving as Quarter Master aboard the Impregnable towards the end of his ten-year engagement, William had signed on for a further period of Continuous Service from 1 July 1863 *To Complete Time for Pension*.

William was 32 years old at the time of his marriage at Reading, Berkshire, in the parish church of St. Lawrence:

4 Mar 1860 ***William Tapson*** *Full Bachelor Seaman Caversham Road*
(Father: Ebsworthy Tapson, Miner)
Mary Ann Day *Full Spinster Caversham Road*
(Father: James Day, Plumber)
by Licence in the presence of Thomas Spyer & Sophia Freeman

William and Mary Ann were back in Plymouth for the baptism at St. Andrew's church of their first child:

23 Feb 1862 William James Day son of William & Mary Ann Tapson, Cecil St. Mariner (born 1 January 1862)

And an infant buried at Stoke Damerel the following year would seem to have been their second child:

29 Dec 1863 James Tapson 12 Baker's Place Died 26 December 1863 1 day

The address is the same as that given in the register of Ford Park Cemetery, just a month later, for William, who was indeed 36 years old at the time:

31 Jan 1864 William Tapson Baker's Place, Richmond Walk, D'port (Clowance) 36

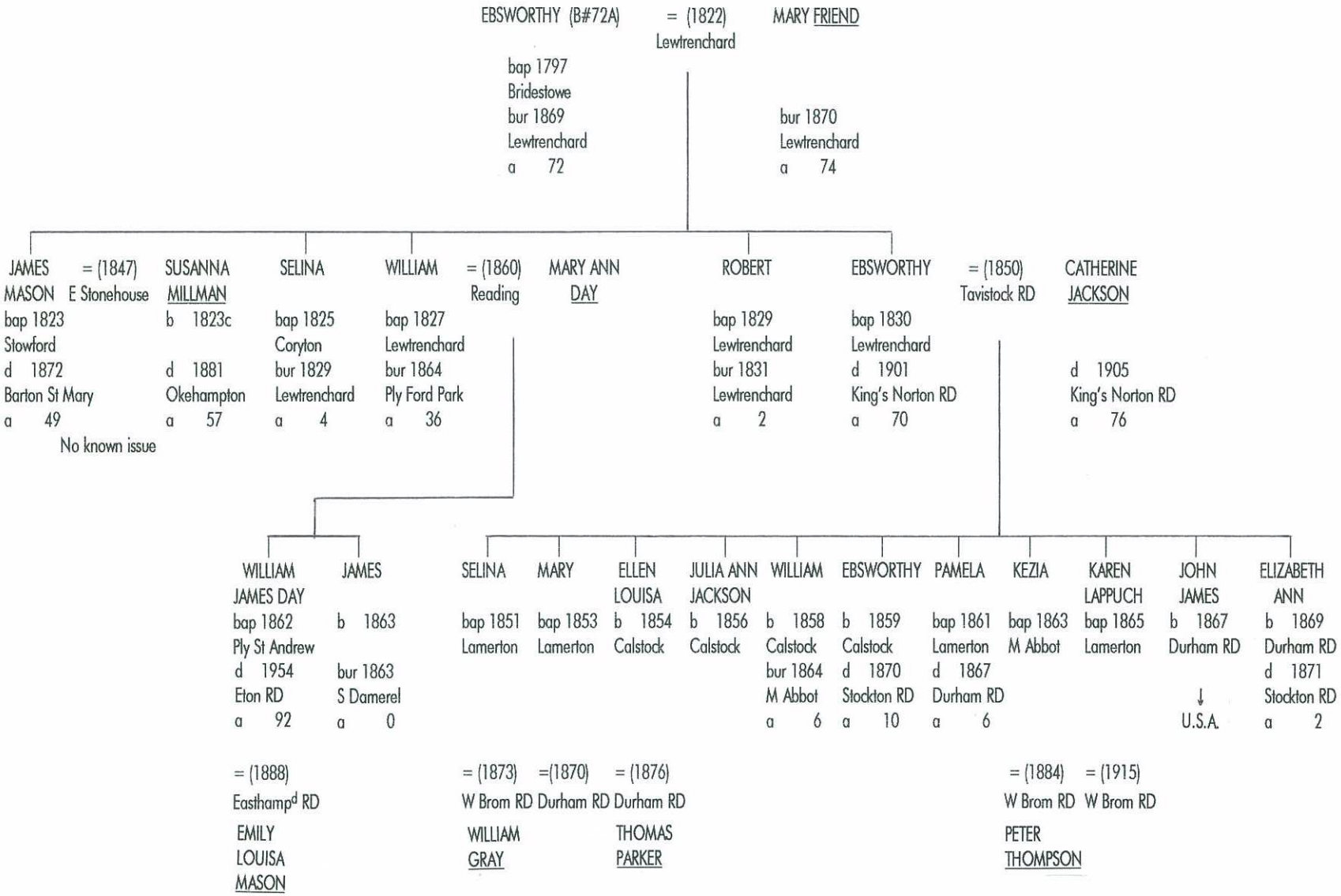
William's service record had come to an end during the month before his death.

In 1881 William James Day, the only surviving son of William and Mary Ann, was working about 10 miles from Reading, where his parents had been married; he is included in the census return for the parish of Warfield (PRO RG11/1318 Fo. 105):

Wick Hill Road
James Dorling Head Mar 39 Vet. Surgeon Berks, New Windsor
.....
Will[m] J. Tapson Serv Un 19 Groom Devon, Plymouth

Warfield is in Easthampstead R.D., the registrar's district in which the marriage of William James Day was registered in 1888, Q1.•

•The deaths of William J. D. Tapson, aged 92, and of Emily L. Tapson, aged 90, both registered in 1954, Q3 (Eton R.D.), refer to James William Day Tapson and, presumably, his wife. See also Appendix VI (Addenda)



DESCENDANTS OF EBSWORTHY TAPSON OF LEWTRENCHARD (B#72A)

9.15 ROBERT TAPSON OF KENN, LABOURER (B#72B?)

The register of the parish of Kenn, just to the south of Exeter, records the marriage:

31 Aug 1831 ***Robert Tapson*** *Batchelor &* ***Ann Bedford*** *Spinster both of this Parish by Banns in the presence of Rd Bedford & Anne Bedford*

followed by the baptisms:

22 Apr 1832	*George*	*son of Robert & Ann Tapson,*	*Kennford,*	*Labourer (born 21 November 1831)*
4 Nov 1833	*Charles John*	*son of Robert & Ann Tapson,*	*Kennford,*	*Labourer*
23 Mar 1836	*Mary Hannah*	*dau of Robert & Ann Tapson,*	*Kennford,*	*Labourer*
29 Mar 1840	*Charles Alford*	*son of Robert & Ann Tapson,*	*Kennford,*	*Labourer*

and the burials:

7 Nov 1833	*Charles John Tapson*	*Kennford*	*An infant*
8 Sep 1837	*Mary Hannah Tapson*	*Kennford*	*18 months*
3 Jun 1840	*Robert Tapson*	*Kennford*	*42*

A *Female* whose birth and death were registered in 1838, Q3 (St. Thomas R.D.) was probably another child of Robert and Ann. Kenn lies in the St. Thomas R.D., and the hamlet of Kennford is just to the north of Kenn village.

Robert, the fifth son of George B#47, was baptized on 28 February 1799, so he would have been in his 42nd year when Robert Tapson of Kenn was buried. Although this is the only direct evidence available that Robert Tapson of Kenn was B#72b, there was, however, no other death registered of a Robert Tapson, after civil registration began in 1837, that could refer to B#72b, nor has any evidence come to light of any other Robert Tapson born about the same time as Robert B#72b to whom this burial entry might refer. Thus, although it is not possible to establish the identity of Robert Tapson of Kenn with the absolute degree of certainty which has been possible for the other descendants of the Bridestowe Tapsons, for whom we also know at the very least either the birthplace or the father's name, there is nevertheless a very high degree of probability that he was B#72b. It is also noteworthy that the first child was christened *George*, the name of the father of B#72b.

The 1841 census return for Kenn (PRO HO107/220/1) shows that after Robert's death the family broke up. George was living with Richard Bickford and his wife (Fo. 11):

Kennford

Richard Bickford	*66*	*Ag Lab*	*Born in Devonshire*
Mary Bickford	*62*		*Born in Devonshire*
George Tapson	*9*		*Born in Devonshire*

And Charles Alford was living with Samuel Bedford, his wife and family (Fo. 12):

Kennford

Samuel Bedford	*43*	*Shoemaker*	*Born in Devonshire*
.....			
Charles Alford Tapson	*1*		*Born in Devonshire*

It seems likely that the enumerator wrote *Bickford* in error for *Bedford* on Folio 11 of this census return. Ann had been born at Kennford (page 325), so this Richard and Mary may well have been her parents;• moreover, one of the witnesses at Ann's wedding was named Richard Bedford. It seems probable, therefore, that George was living with his grandparents and Charles Alford with his uncle and aunt. The 1851 census return (PRO HO107/1867 Fo. 476) lists no *Bickford* in Kenn parish, but it does include a Mary Bedford:

Kennford Village

Mary Bedford	*Head*	*Wid*	*73*	*Nurse*	*Devon, Kenn*
Charles Bedford	*Son*	*Mar*	*28*	*Postboy*	*„ „*

The census was held on 30/31 March 1851, and the Kenn parish register records the burial:

30 Mar 1851 *Richard Bedford* *Kennford* *80*

so it seems that Mary had only just been widowed.

•*Bedford Ann, dau of Richard & Mary* was baptized at Kenn on 16 February 1807.

The 1851 census return for the parish of St. Marychurch, immediately north of the Torquay parish of Tormoham, shows that Robert's widow had remarried (PRO HO107/1872 Fo. 126):

Plain Moor Place					
Charles Bedford	*Head*	*Mar*	*36*	*Farm Lab*	*Devon, Kenton*
Ann Bedford	*Wife*	*Mar*	*42*		*„ Kennford*
John Tapson	*Son-in-law*	*Un*	*19*	*Woodturner*	*„ „*
Charles Alf[d] Tapson	*Son-in-law*	*Un*	*12*	*Errand Boy*	*„ „*

In the census return *John* must have been written in error for *George* as the name of the elder son. The parish of Kenton, the birthplace of Ann's second husband, is immediately south-east of Kenn parish, so Charles may have been one of Ann's cousins; their marriage does not appear to have been registered.•

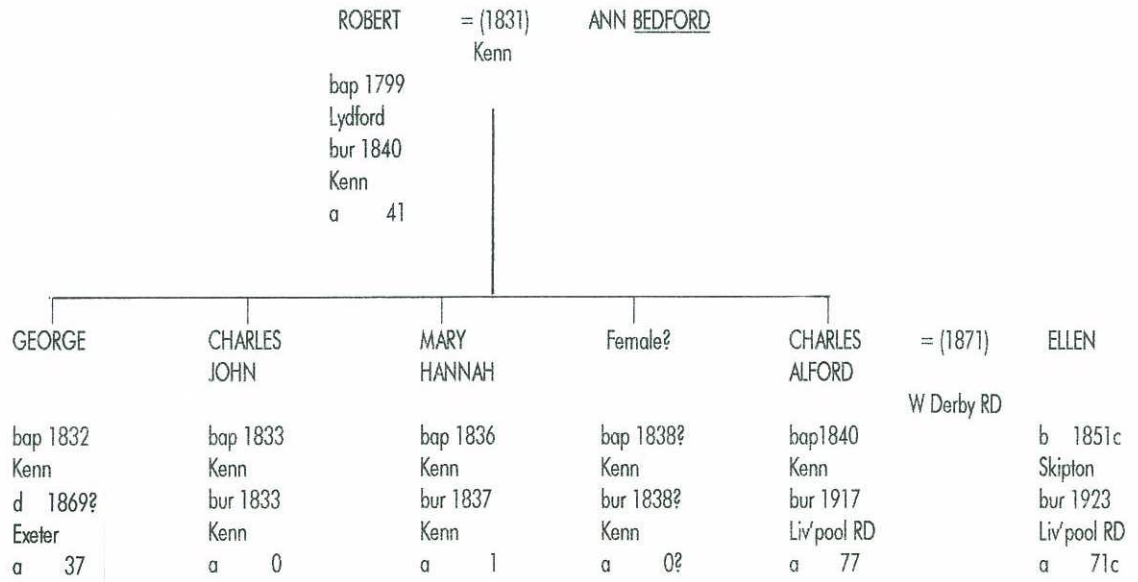
Charles Alford seems to have changed his name: he would have been 31 years old when the marriage of a *Charles Alfred Tapson* was registered in 1871, Q2 (West Derby R.D.), and 41 years old at the time of the 1881 census (PRO RG11/3637 Fo. 2) for Toxteth Park, which is to the north of Liverpool city centre in the West Derby R.D:

145 Beaufort St.					
Charles A. Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*37*	*Mariner*	*Devonshire, Torquay*
Ellen Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*29*		*Yorks, Skipton on Swale*
Charles Cameron	*Lodger*	*Mar*	*37*	*...?... Labourer*	*Ireland*

Charles's birthplace was Kenn, but he was living at Torquay by 1851; if his mother had remarried and moved to Torquay soon after his father's death, then Charles would probably have been too young to remember anything about Kenn.•

Charles would have been 77 years old when the death of *Charles A. Tapson, aged 77* was registered (Liverpool R.D.) in 1917, Q4. Ellen's death was registered (Liverpool R.D.) in 1923, Q1; her age was given as 73, but to be consistent with that recorded at the time of the 1881 census it should have been given as 71.

Descendants of Robert Tapson of Kenn (B#72b?)



• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

9.16 JOSEPH TAPSON OF LONDON, PUBLICAN (B#74)

The youngest son of George B#47 was 29 years old when he married in the church of The Holy Trinity, Exeter:

2 Mar 1832 ***Joseph Tapson*** *of the Parish of St. David in the County of the City of Exeter Servant a Bachelor &*
Mary Hodge *of this Parish Spinster*
by licence in the presence of R^{d} Dean & Tho^{s} Whicker

The first child of Joseph and Mary was baptized in the church of St. Thomas the Apostle, Exeter:

6 Jan 1833 Maria dau of Joseph & Mary Tapson, Alphington St., Labourer

Joseph and Mary then moved with their infant daughter to London, where another daughter was baptized in St. Mary's church, Lambeth (GLRO):

31 May 1835 Agnes Prout dau of Joseph & Mary Tapson, Pratt St., Postman

The next two children were baptized in the Pentonville Chapel of St. James, Clerkenwell (GLRO):

31 Dec 1837 Joseph son of Joseph & Mary Tapson, Charlotte Terrace, Islington Letter Carrier (born 30 June 1837)
2 Feb 1840 Alfred son of Joseph & Mary Tapson, 19 Charlotte Terrace Islington, Letter Carrier (born 7 January 1840)

It was in this same church that the eldest daughter of Joseph and Mary was buried:

17 Jan 1841 Maria Tapson St. Mary, Islington 8

Joseph and Mary were still at Charlotte Terrace for the 1841 census for Islington (PRO HO107/665/8 Fo. 43):

Charlotte Terrace			
Joseph Tapson	*35-39*	*Letter Carr^{r}*	*Not born in Middlesex*
Mary Tapson	*35-39*		*Not born in Middlesex*
Agnes Tapson	*6*		*Born in Middlesex*
Joseph Tapson	*3*		*Born in Middlesex*
Alfred Tapson	*1*		*Born in Middlesex*
Geo Pratt	*40-44*	*Writer*	*Born in Middlesex*

The following births were then registered: Ellen Maria in 1842, Q2 (Islington R.D.); Mary Ann in 1844, Q2 (Clerkenwell R.D.); Charles in 1846, Q2 (Strand R.D.); Amelia Mary in 1848, Q3 (St. James R.D.); Louisa Emma in 1850, Q1 (St. Luke R.D.). These were probably all children of Joseph and Mary, but their birth certificates would be needed for confirmation in the case of Mary Ann and Louisa Emma, both of whom were dead before the 1851 census. Mary Ann's funeral was held, as had been Maria's, at the Pentonville Chapel of St. James, Clerkenwell (GLRO):

26 Dec 1846 Mary Ann Tapson Covent Garden Market 2

and Louisa Emma's death was registered in 1850, Q2 (St. Luke R.D.). All the surviving children were included in the 1851 census return for St. James, Westminster (PRO HO107/1484 Fo. 335):

21 Pall Mall					
Joseph Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*48*	*Publican*	*Devon, Bridestowe*
Mary Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*44*		*„ Milton Abbot*
Agnes Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*15*		*Surrey, Lambeth*
Joseph Tapson	*Son*		*13*	*Attorney's Clerk*	*Islington*
Alfred Tapson	*Son*		*11*	*Scholar*	*„*
Ellen Tapson	*Dau*		*9*	*„*	*„*
Charles Tapson	*Son*		*5*	*„*	*St. Pauls, Covent Garden*
Mary Tapson	*Dau*		*2*		*Devon, Bampton*
Edward Cotterell		*Un*	*23*	*Waiter & Potman*	*London*
Ann Daniels		*Un*	*38*	*Servant*	*Bristol*
P. I. .....?		*Un*	*49*	*?*	*Germany*

The youngest member of the family must have been Amelia Mary, who would have been 2 years old.

Joseph B#74 would have been 48 at the time of this census. His cousin Joseph B#67 was three years younger; so there can be no doubt regarding the identity of this Joseph, who seems to have been accurate about ages since those of all his children are correctly recorded in the census return. The name of Joseph's public house is given in Kelly's 1851 Post Office Directory for London:

Tapson Joseph, "Bell" P.H. 21 Pall Mall

Kelly's London directories for 1859 and 1860 list:

Tapson Jsph. "Duke of Cornwall" P.H. Alexnd. ter. Ledbury rd W

The birth of another son, Frederick William, had been registered (Westminster R.D.) in 1852, Q3. And it is likely to have been Joseph's daughter Ellen Maria whose marriage was registered in 1869, Q4 (Chorlton R.D.) and his daughter Amelia Mary whose marriage was registered in 1870, Q2 (Dartford R.D.).• Meanwhile Joseph had moved to yet another public house, which is listed in Kelly's 1871 directory for London:

Tapson Joseph, "Royal George" P.H. 30 Bristol Gds W

Joseph is shown at this address in the 1871 census return for Paddington (PRO RG10/12 Fo. 10):

30 Bristol Gardens "Royal George"

Joseph Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*68*	*Licensed Victualer*	*Devon, Bridestowe*
Mary Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*67*	*Assists in business*	*„ Milton Abbot*
Agness Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*32*	*„ „ „*	*Surrey, Lambeth*
Alfred Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*29*	*"Ships" Corporal Mariner*	*Middlesex, Islington*
Frederick Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*18*	*White Smith*	*„ Westminster*
Mary Stephens	*Boarder*	*Wid*	*68*	*No occupation*	*Devon, Exeter*
Albert Brackstrie?	*Serv*	*Un*	*21*	*Potman*	*Hants, Appleshaw*

The marriage of Agnes Prout was registered in 1872, Q4 (Hendon R.D.).

The 1881 census (PRO RG11/60 Fo. 9) sees Joseph and Mary living at Hammersmith in west London:

3 Bamborough Gds

Joseph Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*78*	*Licenced Victualar*	*Devon, Bristown*
Mary Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*75*		*„ Melton Abbott*

The *Mary Tapson, Aged 74* whose death was registered (Fulham R.D.) in 1884, Q1, must have been Joseph's wife; the census returns show no consistency in the ages given for her, but she was probably several years older than the 74 recorded on her death certificate. And Joseph would have been about 84 years old when the death of a *Joseph Tapson, aged 78* was registered (W. Derby R.D.) in 1887, Q1.

9.17 JOSEPH TAPSON JUNIOR

It would seem to have been Joseph's eldest son, 37 years old at the time, who was married at the parish church of St. Pancras:

2 Mar 1875	***Joseph Tapson Junr***	*Full*	*Bachelor*	*Gentleman*
	3 Tavistock Place	*(Father: Joseph Tapson, Gentleman)*		
	Georgina Frances Goddard	*Full*	*Widow*	
	St. Peter, Hammersmith	*(Father: Henry Barridge, Builder, deceased)*		
	by Licence in the presence of Henry George Barridge & .....?			

The 1881 census return (PRO RG11/244 Fo. 94) for Lower Holloway, Islington, lists:

6 Hope St

Georgina F. Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*46*	*Grocer*	*Middlesex, St Pancras*
Josephine M. Tapson	*Dau*		*12*	*Scholar*	*Kent, Belvedere*
Maud A. Tapson	*Dau*		*9*	*„*	*„ Kilburn*
Archie W. Tapson	*Son*		*7*	*„*	*„ Lewisham*
Alfred V. Tapson	*Son*		*6*	*„*	*M'sex, Hammersmith*
Joseph W. Barridge	*Boarder*	*Widr*	*44*	*County Court Officer*	*„ St Pancras*

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

Like Georgina Frances, the boarder was born at St. Pancras, so he may have been her brother. The births had been registered of Josephine Mary in 1868, Q4 (Dartford R.D.), Alice Maude in 1872, Q1 (Hendon R.D.), Archie Wentworth in 1873, Q3 (Lewisham R.D.), and Alfred Victor in 1874, Q3 (Kensington R.D.). They were presumably children of Joseph and Georgina born before their marriage; it is possible that Georgina Frances had separated from her first husband but was not free to remarry whilst he was still alive. The death was registered in 1885, Q3 (Edmonton R.D) of *Josephine Mary A. F. Tapson, aged 17*; the age given for her was about right.

Although married to Joseph by 1881, Georgina Frances was recorded in the census as head of the household; the reason for this is that Joseph was being detained at her majesty's pleasure. He appears in the 1881 census return (PRO RG11/248 Fo. 100) for Pentonville Prison, Islington:

Joseph Tapsome Convict Mar 40 Convicted Felon Middlesex, London

His age was actually 43. A Criminal Trial Register (PRO HO27/186) records that Joseph had been given a five-year sentence at the Central Criminal Court (the *Old Bailey*) on 13 December 1880 for forgery. A Pentonville admissions register (PRO PCOM2/78) states that he had been tried at the Central Criminal Court on 22 March 1880 and sentenced on 13 December 1880 to five years penal servitude, to be computed from 22 November 1880, for forging a receipt for money, and had been transferred from Newgate prison on 24 December 1880; it gives his occupation as *Clerk* and his religion as *C of E*, and notes that he was subsequently moved to Chatham prison on 19 August 1881. No burial was registered in England or Wales for either Joseph or Georgina Frances, so they may have emigrated after Joseph's release from prison.•

9.18 ALFRED TAPSON, MARINER

The second son of Joseph and Mary, born 7 January 1840, was 13 years old when he joined the Royal Navy, but added a year to his age by giving his year of birth as 1839. This is recorded on his Entry Forms preserved among the Seamen's Service Records (PRO ADM139/1 No. 2):

H.M.S Crocodile 22 June 1853 *Alfred Tapson*
Born: Lambeth, Surrey *7 January 1839*
Height: 5 feet 2¾ inches *Complexion: Dark* *Hair: Dk Brown* *Eyes: Lt Brown*
Ship entered: Crocodile *Date of Entry: 22 June 1853* *Rating: Boy 2nd Class*
Date of Volunteering for Continuous and General Service: 22 June 1853
Period for which he has volunteered: 10 years after the Age of 18

H.M.S. Victory 24 July 1853 *Alfred Tapson*
Born: Lambeth, Surrey *7 January 1839*
Height: 5 feet 2 inches *Complexion: Fresh* *Hair: Brown* *Eyes: Hazel*
Ship entered: H.M.S. Victory *Date of Entry: 22 June 1853* *Rating: Boy 2nd Class*
No Service Record

Alfred's career in the Royal Navy did not last long, for the entry forms are endorsed:

Discharged by purchase 28 October 1857

It seems however that Alfred transferred to merchant ships, since he is described in the 1871 census as a *"Ships" Corporal Mariner* (page 327).

Alfred's marriage was registered in 1876, Q4 (Marylebone R.D.); and he and his wife appear in the 1881 census for Portland Place, St. Marylebone (PRO RG11/137 Fo. 72). Alfred had by then given up his career as a seaman, for he and his wife were living-in servants at a boarding house accommodating eight lady teachers aged between 17 and 25, most described as *Head Teacher*:

7 Buckingham St

Lilian Tapson	*Serv*	*Mar*	*28*	*Servant Domestic*	*London*
Alfred Tapson	*Serv*	*Mar*	*42*	*„* *„*	*„*

The death of *Alfred Tapson, aged 67*, his exact age, was registered (St. Pancras R.D.) in 1907, Q3.•

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

9.19 CHARLES TAPSON OF MIDDLETON, JOINER

The third son of Joseph and Mary eventually settled in Lancashire, where he is found living at Middleton, about six miles north-east of Manchester city centre, at the time of the 1881 census return for that parish (PRO RG11/4091 Fo. 50):

14 Top Schwabe St.

Charles Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*35*	*Joiner*	*Middlesex, London*
Sarah J. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*22*	*„ Wife*	*Ireland, Athlone*
Charles William Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*5*	*Scholar*	*East India, Agra*
Georgina Frances Tapson	*Dau*		*3*	*„*	*Lancashire, Middleton*
Sarah Eveline Tapson	*Dau*		*4 mo.*		*„ „*

Charles would have been just about 35 years old at the time of this census; his marriage was not registered in England or Wales, so the wedding could perhaps have taken place in Ireland. Charles may have joined the Indian Army, for it would appear that he and his young wife had spent some time in Uttar Pradesh, where Charles William was born about 1875, before returning to England with their young son. The births were then registered (Oldham R.D.) of Georgina Frances, obviously named after Charles's sister-in-law, in 1878, Q2, and of Sarah Eveline in 1880, Q4.

The marriages were registered of *Sarah Evelyn Tapson* in 1902, Q3 (Oldham R.D.); of *Georgina Frances Tapson* in 1904, Q1 (Prestwich R.D.); and of *Charles William J. H. Tapson* in 1904, Q2 (Ashton R.D.). Ashton-under-Lyne is about six miles south-east of Middleton and Prestwich is about three miles south-west of Middleton.

The following births were probably of further children of Charles and Sarah, but the birth certificates of those who died in infancy would be needed for confirmation:

James Alfred H.	born 1883, Q1 (Oldham R.D.)	died	1884, Q1 (Oldham R.D.)
Henry Edward	born 1885, Q1 (Prestwich R.D.)	married	1906, Q1 (Oldham R.D.)
Tom Arthur	born 1887, Q3 (Oldham R.D.)	died	1890, Q2 (Oldham R.D.)
Reinier Brocker	born 1890, Q2 (Oldham R.D.)	married	1916, Q1 (Prestwich R.D.)
Frederick George H.	born 1893, Q3 (Oldham R.D.)	married	1922, Q3 (Oldham R.D.)
Jennie Hannah A.	born 1897, Q4 (Oldham R.D.)	died	1898, Q1 (Oldham R.D.)

It is perhaps unlikely that *Charles Percy H. Tapson*, born 1899, Q3 (Oldham R.D.), died 1900, Q1 (Oldham R.D.) was another son of Charles and Sarah given the same firstname as their eldest son, Charles William. He may have been Charles William's son, though Charles William does not seem to have married until nearly five years after this birth.•

The death of *Sarah Jane Tapson, aged 45* was registered (Oldham R.D.) in 1906, Q1. The age given is reasonably consistent with that given at the time of the 1881 census. Charles's death was registered in 1926, Q4 (Bury R.D.); his age was correctly recorded as 80. Bury is about five miles north-west of Middleton.

Frederick William, the youngest son of Joseph and Mary, married Sarah Fricker in 1886, Q3 (Camberwell R.D.). In 1891 they were living in Paddington:

3 Braden Street

Frederick Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*41*	*Cab Driver (Groom)*	*London, St James*
Sarah Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*46*		*Wilts, Leas*
James Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*16*	*Van Guard*	*Wilts, Leas*

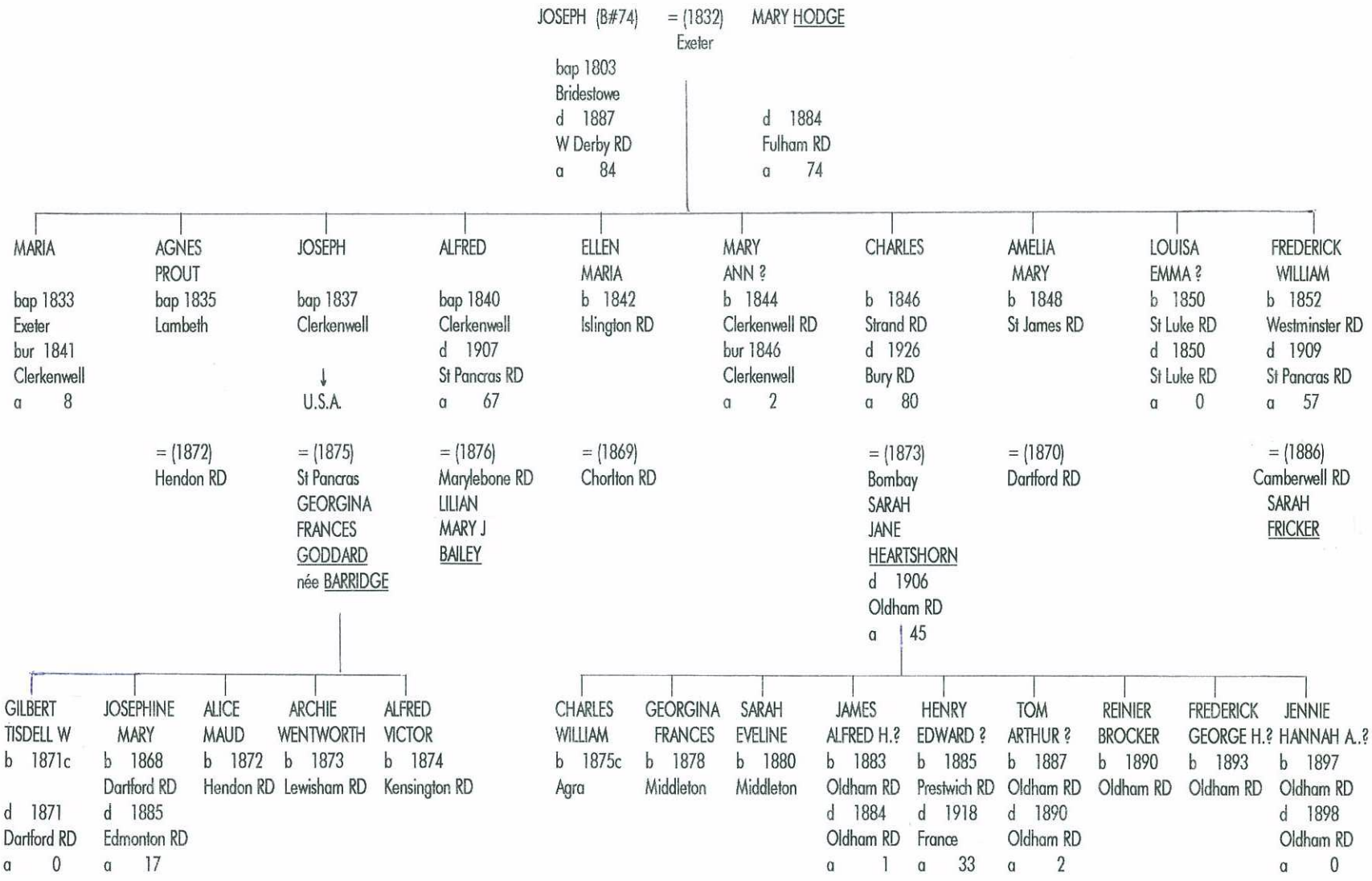
The birth of James Fricker had been registered in Wiltshire (Mere R.D.) in 1874, Q1. Sarah's death at the age of 59 was registered (Camberwell R.D.) in 1900, Q4. Frederick, who would have been 48 at the time of the 1901 census, appears in the return for London, Newington:

30 Alberda Street

F W Tapson	*Boarder Widr*		*50*	*Groom*	*City of London*

Frederick would have been 57 years old when the death of *Frederick William Tapson, aged 59*, was registered (Pancras R.D.) in 1909, Q4.

• See Appendix VI (Addenda) & Appendix VII (Further Addenda)



DESCENDANTS OF JOSEPH TAPSON OF LONDON (B#74)

9.20 SAMUEL TAPSON OF PLYMOUTH, LABOURER (B#80)

The second surviving son of Nicholas and Mary Tapson of Bridestowe was 20 years old when he was included in the 1841 census return for Thrushelton (PRO HO107/233/15 Fo. 8):

Thomas Palmer	*20-24*	*Farmer*	*Born in Devonshire*
.....			
Samuel Tapson	*15-19*	*Man Servant*	*Born in Devonshire*

Four years later Samuel was married at Stoke Damerel:

27 Oct 1845 ***Samuel Tapson*** *Full* *Bachelor* *Labourer*
27 James St. *(Father: Nicholas Tapson, Farmer)*
Mary Ann Brooking *Full* *Spinster*
1 Catherine St. *(Father: John Brooking, Labourer)*
by Banns in the presence of John Symons & Grace Algar

Samuel and Mary Ann moved to Exeter, where the birth of a son, William Henry, was registered in 1846, Q3, and where the following baptisms took place at the church of St. Mary Major:

2 Jan 1847 *William Henry* *son of Samuel & Mary Ann Tapson, Mermaid Yard, Waggoner*
12 Dec 1847 *Mary Ann* *dau of Samuel & Mary Ann Tapson, Sun St., Labourer*
18 Nov 1849 *Selina* *dau of Samuel & Mary Ann Tapson, Preston St., Labourer*

Two funerals also took place at St. Mary Major:

17 Jan 1847	*William Henry Tapson*	*Mermaid Yard*	*6 months*
29 Sep 1850	*Selina Tapson*	*West Street*	*1*

The infants were buried at St. Bartholomew New Cemetery, Selina's age being recorded as 10 months.

Some three months later Selina's name was given to the next daughter to be born; her birth was registered in 1851, Q1 (Southampton R.D.). And it is in the return for Southampton that the family are to be found in the 1851 census (PRO HO107/1669 Fo. 1037):

12 Bridge Court

Samuel Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*31*	*Brick Maker's Laborer*	*Devon, Bridistowe*
Mary Ann Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*29*		*„ Oakhampton*
Mary Ann Tapson	*Dau*		*3*		*„ Exeter*
Selina Tapson	*Dau*		*1 mo.*		*Hants, Southampton*

Samuel B#80 would have been 30 years old at the time of the census.

A year later the family were back in Devonshire, where Selina and another three children were baptized in the church of Charles the Martyr, Plymouth:

30 May 1852 *Selina* *dau of Samuel & Mary Ann Tapson, Sutton Road, Labourer (born 25 February 1851)*
26 Jun 1853 *Samuel* *son of Samuel & Mary Ann Tapson, Lockyer Place, Labourer (born 12 June 1853)*
15 Jul 1855 *Melina* *dau of Samuel & Mary Ann Tapson, Lockyer Place, Labourer (born 18 May 1855)*
20 Mar 1859 *Elizabeth* *dau of Samuel & Mary Ann Tapson, Parr Street, Labourer (born 26 February 1859)*

Selina was just two weeks short of her fourth birthday when she was buried at Ford Park:

11 Feb 1855 *Selina Tapson* *Lockyer Place* *3*

Melina's marriage was registered in 1875, Q2 (Plymouth R.D.), and all the other children had left home by the time of the 1881 census for the parish of Charles the Martyr, Plymouth (PRO RG11/2190 Fo. 46):[•]

3 Pottery Court

Samuel Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*55*	*Gen Labr*	*Devon, Bridestowe*
Mary A. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*59*		*„ Okehampton*

[•] See Appendix VI (Addenda)

By 1891 Samuel and Mary Ann had moved to a new address, though still within the parish of Charles the Martyr, where they are included in the 1891 census (PRO RG12/1728 Fo. 16):

64 Exeter Street

Samuel Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*70*	*General Labourer*	*Devon, Bridestowe*
Mary A. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*69*		*„ Okehampton*

They both died at this address, and were buried at Ford Park Cemetery:

27 Sep 1905	*Mary Ann Tapson*	*64 Exeter Street, Plymouth (Charles)*	*83*
15 Apr 1906	*Samuel Tapson*	*64 Exeter Street, Plymouth (Charles)*	*84*

Samuel would have been 85 years old.

9.21 SAMUEL TAPSON OF PLYMOUTH, SAWYER

The marriage of Samuel, the only surviving son of Samuel and Mary Ann, was registered in 1874, Q3 (Plymouth R.D.). The births were registered (Plymouth R.D.) of their first three children: Emma Lue in 1875, Q4; Samuel Richard in 1877, Q3; Lily Rosina M. in 1879, Q2. They are all shown in the 1881 census (PRO RG11/2190 Fo. 79) for the parish of Charles the Martyr:

59 Treville St.

Samuel Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*27*	*Sawyer*	*Devon, Plymouth*
Emma Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*25*	*Dressmaker*	*„ Devonport*
Emma Lue Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*5*	*Scholar*	*„ Plymouth*
Samuel Richard Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*3*	*Nil*	*„ „*
Lily Rosina Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*2*		*„ „*

Samuel's age is correctly recorded.

Further births were then registered (Plymouth R.D.): Florence Lilian in 1881, Q3; George Courtaney in 1883, Q2; Lucy Eleanor in 1885, Q3; Alfred Stanley in 1887, Q1; Herbert Stanley in 1888, Q2; Ernest William in 1890, Q2. The register of Ford Park Cemetery also records the burials:

22 Jul 1883	*Emma Louie Tapson*	*52 Clara Building, Plymouth (Charles)*	*7½*
24 Mar 1887	*Alfred Stanley Tapson*	*55 Treville Street, Plymouth (Charles)*	*3 weeks*
11 Jul 1889	*Herbert Stanley Tapson*	*20 Brunswick Rd., Plymouth (Charles)*	*14 months*

The surviving children all appear in the 1891 census for Charles the Martyr (PRO RG12/1729 Fo. 81):

20 Brunswick Rd

Samuel Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*38*	*Sawyer*	*Devon, Plymouth*
Emma Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*35*		*„ „*
Samuel R. Tapson	*Son*		*13*	*Errandboy*	*„ „*
Mabel Tapson	*Dau*		*12*	*Scholar*	*„ „*
Lilian Tapson	*Dau*		*9*	*„*	*„ „*
George Tapson	*Son*		*8*	*„*	*„ „*
Lucy Tapson	*Dau*		*5*	*„*	*„ „*
Earnest Tapson	*Son*		*1*		*„ „*

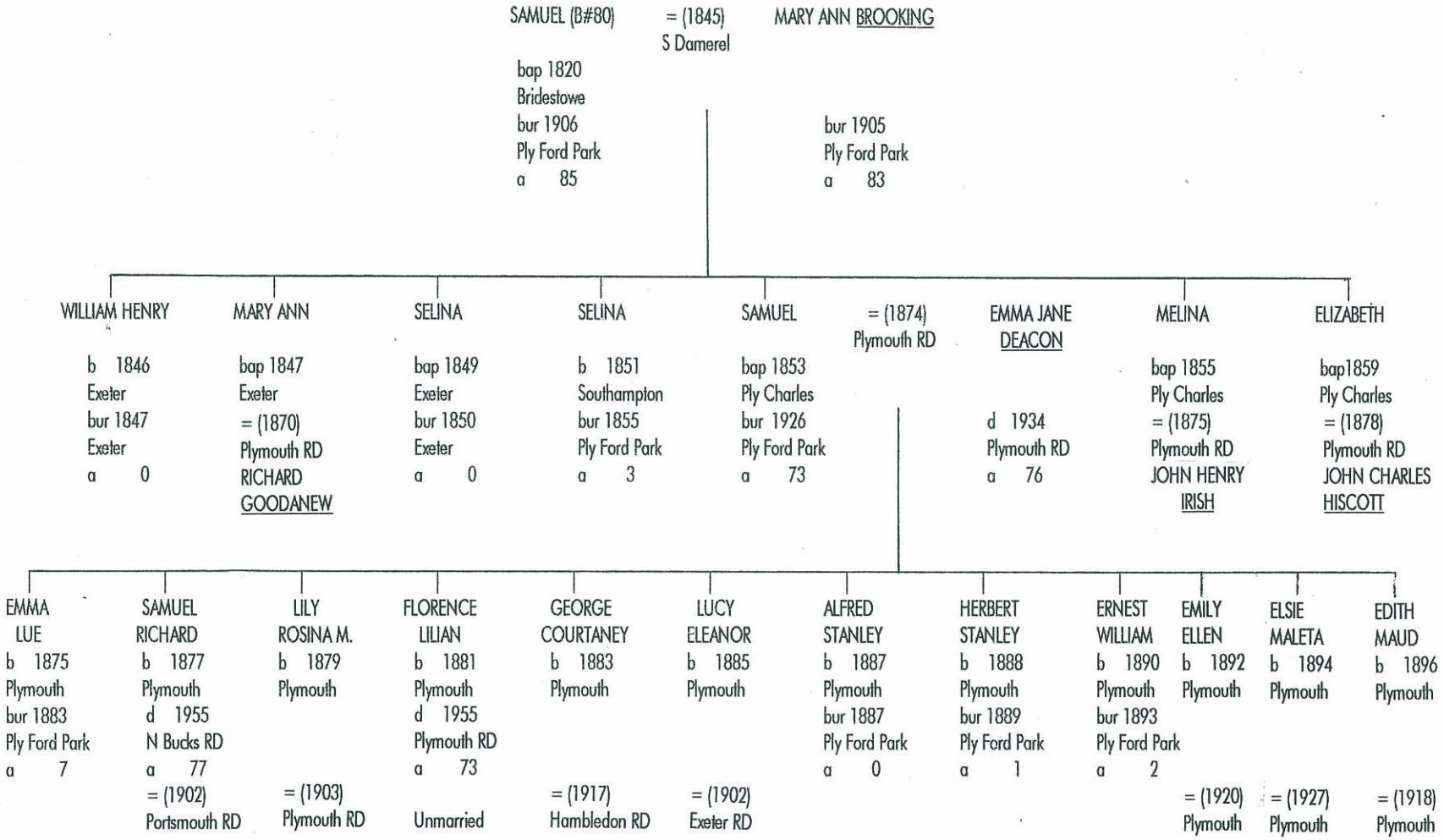
Mabel and Lilian must be the daughters whose births were registered as *Lily Rosina M.* and as *Florence Lilian*. [The Brunswick Road address in the burial entry for Herbert Stanley confirms that he was indeed a son of Samuel and Emma; and the repetition of *Stanley* as a second name is useful circumstantial evidence that Alfred Stanley was another son.]

It is not known whether further births registered at Plymouth refer to more children of Samuel and Emma. However, two burials at Ford Park Cemetery are of a son, their youngest at the time of the 1891 census, and of Samuel himself, whose age was accurately recorded:

1 Jan 1893	*Ernest William Tapson*	*20 Brunswick Rd, Plymouth (Charles)*	*2*
27 Nov 1926	*Samuel Tapson*	*3 Brunswick Road, Plymouth*	*73*

And *Emma J. Tapson, aged 76*, whose death was registered in 1934, Q1 (Plymouth R.D.), must have been Samuel's widow; the age is almost consistent with the ages given for her in the census returns.*

*See Appendix VI (Addenda).



DESCENDANTS OF SAMUEL TAPSON OF PLYMOUTH (B#80)

9.22 JOHN TAPSON OF NORTHUMBERLAND, MINER (B#82)

John B#82, the third surviving son of Nicholas and Mary Tapson, was living in Bridestowe in 1851 (page 147). He was 32 years old when his marriage to Elizabeth Peard was registered in 1858, Q4 (St. Thomas R.D.). [St. Thomas was the very large registrar's district which surrounded Exeter R.D.; its boundaries have changed since 1858.] The births were subsequently registered (St. Thomas R.D.) of Rhoda Ann in 1860, Q3 and of John in 1862, Q1. Rhoda Ann's death was registered in 1861, Q1 (St. Thomas R.D.), and John's death in 1864, Q4 (Tavistock R.D.). It is possible to be fairly confident that Rhoda Ann and John were the first two children of John and Elizabeth, because the birth of another child, Willie, had been registered in 1864, Q2, a few months before John's death, also in the Tavistock R.D.; and it is known for sure from the 1881 census (below) that Willie was a son of John and Elizabeth. The birth of John P. was registered (Tavistock R.D.) in 1866, Q2; he too is included in the 1881 census.•

Next to be registered (Tavistock R.D.) were the birth of Samuel in 1868, Q2 and his death in 1869, Q4, his age being given as 1, followed by the birth of Alfred in 1870, Q4. Their birth certificates* state that Samuel was born on 15 March 1868 and Alfred on 20 September 1870; their parents are named as John Tapson, a Copper Miner, and Elizabeth Tapson, formerly Peard, and their address is given as Calstock, in Cornwall. [At that time Calstock was included in the Tavistock R.D.] Both the first son to be named John and Samuel were buried at Calstock:

6	*Dec*	*1864*	*John Tapson*	*Dimson*	*3*
31	*Dec*	*1869*	*Samuel Tapson*	*Gunnislake*	*1*

Gunnislake is a village within the parish of Calstock which developed in the Nineteenth Century; the area was rich in copper (page 318). Dimson is just outside Gunnislake village.

John and Elizabeth, with their three surviving sons, then moved to Northumberland, the most northerly county in England, where were registered (Tynemouth R.D.) the birth in 1873, Q1 of Mary Elizabeth followed by her death in 1873, Q4, the birth of Robert and his death in 1874, Q2, and Alfred's death also in 1874, Q2, his age correctly given as 3. In the same registrar's district the birth and death of Eliza Palmer were registered in 1875, Q3, and the birth of Alfred Henry in 1877, Q2.

John and Elizabeth, with their three surviving sons, then moved again, this time some twenty miles south to Shotton in County Durham, where were registered (Easington R.D.) the death of Alfred Henry in 1878, Q1 and the birth of Albert in 1879, Q4. John and Elizabeth are shown with their surviving children in the 1881 census return for Holmside (PRO RG11/4949 Fo. 78):

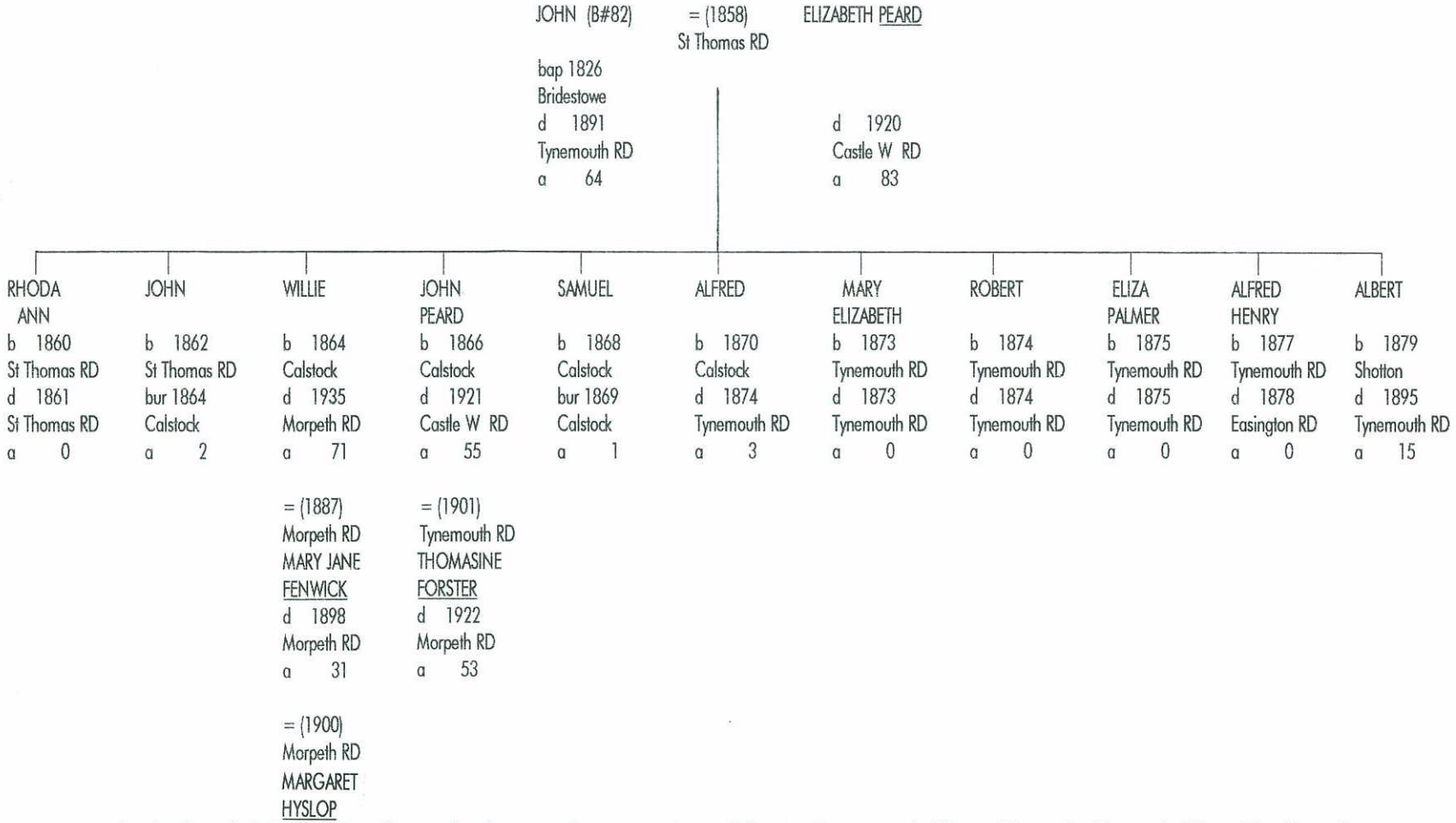
12 Suckers(?) Row

John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*53*	*Coal Miner*	*Devon, Bridstow*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*44*		*„ „*
Willie Tapson	*Son*		*16*	*„ „ Putter*	*Cornwall, Calstock*
John P. Tapson	*Son*		*15*	*„ „ Driver*	*„ „*
Albert Tapson	*Son*		*1*		*Durham, Shotton*

John's age should have been given as 54. Holmside was in the Lanchester R.D.

The family eventually returned to Northumberland; John would have been close to his 65th birthday when his death was registered (Tynemouth R.D.) in 1891, Q3, his age being given as 64. Four years later the death of Albert, his youngest son, was registered, in 1895, Q3 (Tynemouth R.D.); his age was correctly recorded as 15. Willie and John Peard (for that is what the P denoted) were the only two of the eleven children of John and Elizabeth to survive childhood, and they both remained in Northumberland. Willie married Mary Jane Fenwick in 1887, Q1; she died in 1898, Q3, aged 31, and Willie remarried in 1900, Q3; Willie died in 1935, Q4, aged 71.• (All these events were registered in the Morpeth R.D.). The marriage of John Peard was registered in 1901, Q1 (Tynemouth R.D.)• and his death in 1921, Q4 (Castle Ward R.D.), his age accurately given as 55. If she gave her age correctly at the time of the 1881 census, Elizabeth would have been just about 83 years old in 1920, Q2, when the death of *Elizabeth Tapson, aged 83* was registered (Castle Ward R.D.).

* Reported by Mrs. Pauline Johnson, Superintendent Registrat at Tavistock.
• See Appendix VI (Addenda).



The births of children of Willie and John Peard were registered first in Tynemouth RD and later in Morpeth RD. The first of these baptisms, that of John Willie, was registered in 1885, Q4, over a year before Willie's marriage to Mary Jane Fenwick.

9.23 ROBERT TAPSON OF WALKHAMPTON & OPORTO, CARPENTER (B#83)

The youngest son of Nicholas and Mary Tapson was only 19 years old when he was married at Buckland Monachorum:

16 Sep 1849 ***Robert Tapson*** *Full Bachelor Carpenter Horrrabridge*
(Father : Nicholas Tapson, Gardener)
Mary Jane Willcocks *Full Spinster Horrabridge*
(Father: Walter Willcocks, Labourer)
by Banns in the presence of J^no^ Parry & Thomas Spry

Horrabridge is a large development, in the parish of Walkhampton, just off the A386 between Plymouth and Tavistock. The birth of their first child, Elizabeth Ann, was registered (Tavistock R.D.) in 1849, Q4; Elizabeth Ann was baptized at Buckland Monachorum:

28 Apr 1850 Elizabeth Ann dau of Robert & Jane Tapson, Horrabridge, Carpenter

The family appear in the 1851 census for Walkhampton (PRO HO107/1883 Fo. 177):

Little Horrabridge

Robert Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*21*	*Labourer Dartmoor Prison*	*Devon, Bridestowe*
Jane Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*22*	*„ Wife*	*„ Buckland Monachorum*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Dau*		*1*		*„ Walkhampton*

Robert B#83, who in 1841 had been living in Bridestowe with his widowed mother (page 147), was indeed 21 years old at the time of the 1851 census. Dartmoor prison, at Princetown, is about 5 miles from Walkhampton village and a further mile or so from Horrabridge. Built between 1806 and 1809 to accommodate French prisoners of war then crowding the hulks at Plymouth dock, the prison soon held 5,000 French and American prisoners. After the wars the grim granite buildings, which had been built by the prisoners, were deserted, but they were reopened in 1855 as an establishment for convicts. Perhaps, as a carpenter, Robert was helping to prepare for this reopening.

A year after the census, in 1852, Q1, the death of Elizabeth Ann was registered (Tavistock R.D.); her name was given to the next daughter to be born. This daughter and three other children were baptized in Buckland Monachorum church:

29 Aug 1852 Elizabeth Ann dau of Robert & Jane Tapson, Horrabridge, Carpenter
24 Feb 1856 Emmeline dau of Robert & Jane Tapson, Horrabridge, Carpenter
29 Mar 1857 Frederick son of Robert & Jane Tapson, Horrabridge, Carpenter
25 Nov 1860 John son of Robert & Jane Tapson, Horrabridge, Labourer

Emmeline's birth had been registered (as *Emma Lilian*) in 1854, Q4.•

The family then left England for Branca in Portugal, where Robert took employment as a carpenter at the Palhal mine. Four more children were baptized at St. James Chapel, Oporto (PRO RG33/142), which had been built in 1819 and consecrated on 20 August 1843 by Dr. Tomlinson, Bishop of Gibraltar:

25 May 1865 Roda dau of Robert & Mary Jane Tapson, Palhal Mine, Branca, Carpenter
25 May 1865 Mary dau of Robert & Mary Jane Tapson, Palhal Mine, Branca, Carpenter
23 Feb 1867 Mary Jane dau of Robert & Mary Jane Tapson, Palhal, Branca, Carpenter
23 Feb 1867 Robert Henery son of Robert & Mary Jane Tapson, Palhal, Branca, Carpenter

Mary was buried at the British Burying Ground, City of Oporto:

10 Dec 1865 Mary Tapson Palhal Mine, Branca 8 months

Although Mary Jane was a widow living in Plymouth by 1881 (page 337), Robert's death had not been registered in England or Wales, so he too may have died in Portugal.

•Her birth certificate states that Emma Lilian was born on 29 December 1854, and that her father was a carpenter living at *Magpie, Buckland Monachorum*.

The three eldest children of Robert and Mary Jane were married in the church of Charles the Martyr, Plymouth: •

21 Nov 1876 ***Frederick Tapson*** *Full Bachelor Carpenter*
3 Endsleigh Cottages (Father: Robert Tapson, Carpenter)
Elizabeth Mary Harvey *Full Spinster*
3 Endsleigh Cottages (Father: John Harvey, Labourer)
by Banns in the presence of William Stawt & Emmeline Tapson

8 Jan 1877 ***Edward Pooley*** *Full Bachelor Tailor*
Richmond Street, St. Andrews (Father: William Pooley, Miner)
Elizabeth Ann Tapson *Full Spinster*
16 Tavistock Road (Father: Robert Tapson, Carpenter)
by Banns in the presence of Frederick Tapson & Emmeline Tapson

24 Dec 1877 ***William Stawt*** *Full Bachelor Carpenter*
Tavistock Road, Charles (Father: James Stawt, Blacksmith)
Emmeline Tapson *Full Spinster*
Tavistock Road, Charles (Father: Robert Tapson, Carpenter)
by Banns in the presence of William Henry Gray & Mary Emily Gray

The 1881 census return (PRO RG11/2192 Fo. 15) for Plymouth, Charles the Martyr, shows all the rest of her surviving children living at home with Mary Jane:

Exeter Street

Jane Tapson	*Head*	*Wid*	*53*	*Formerly Dressmaker*	*Devon, Horrabridge*
John Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*20*	*Carpenter Apprentice*	*„ „*
Rhoda Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*17*	*Seam Machinist*	*Portugal, British Subject*
Mary Jane Tapson	*Dau*		*14*	*Scholar*	*„ „*
Robert Henry Tapson	*Son*		*14*	*„*	*„ „*

Mary Jane, Robert's widow, was buried at Ford Park Cemetery:

9 Nov 1890 Jane Tapson 6 Amity Place, Plymouth (Charles) 63

The age given for her is consistent with that recorded at the time of the 1881 census.

John Tapson and Rhoda Tapson, both of whose marriages were registered in 1882, Q4 (Plymouth R.D.), were probably two more children of Robert and Mary Jane. And their youngest daughter, Mary Jane, was married in the church of Charles the Martyr, Plymouth:

3 Oct 1886 ***Richard Ernest Knapman*** *22 Bachelor Fitter*
28 Kinterbury Street (Father: John Knapman, Dairyman)
Mary Jane Tapson *20 Spinster*
10 Norley Street (Father: Robert Tapson, Carpenter)
by Banns in the presence of A. C. Titherley & E. A. Pooley

E. A. Pooley, one of the witnesses, was Mary Jane's eldest sister.

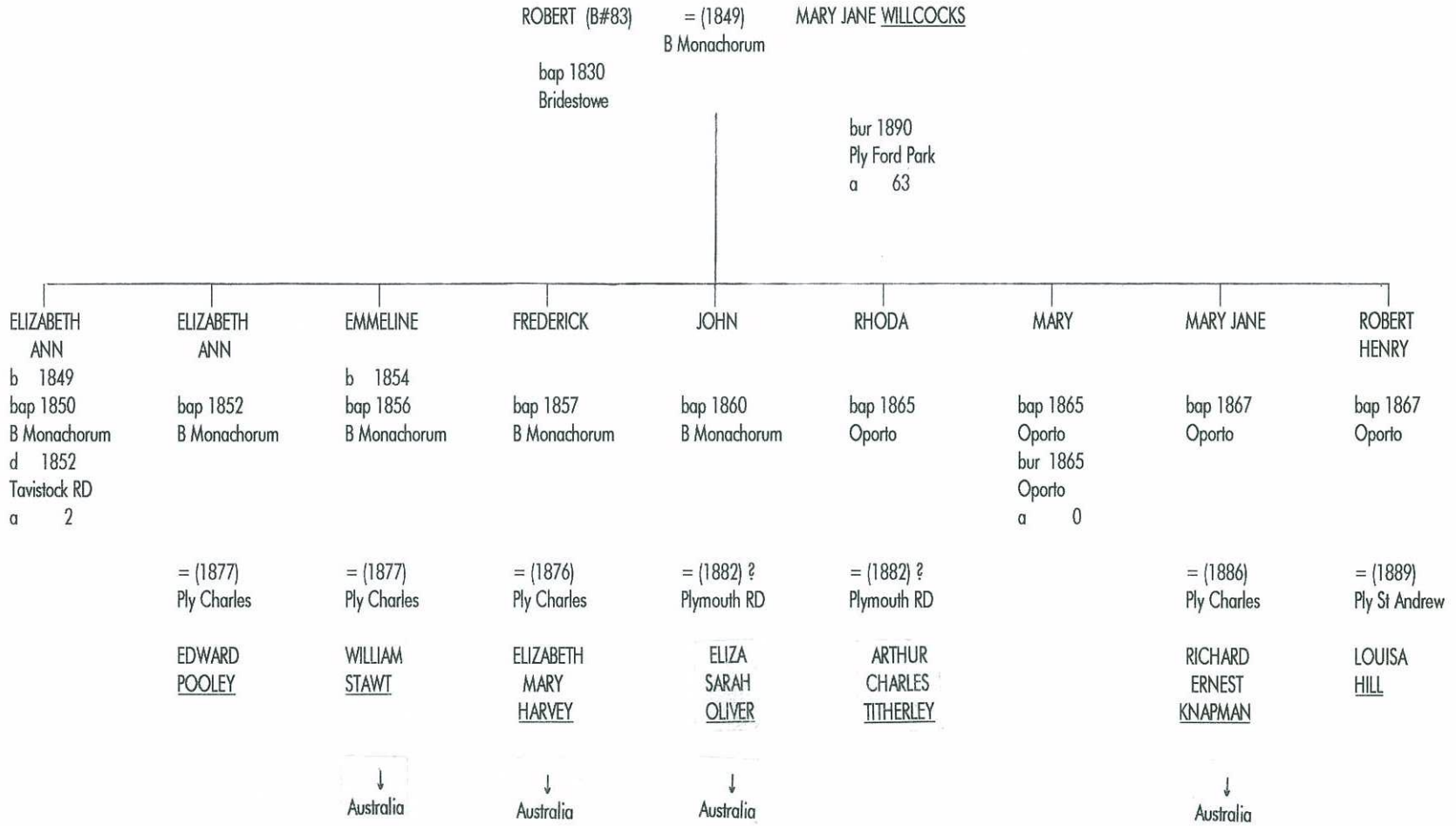
Robert's youngest son was married in the church of St. Andrew, Plymouth:

6 Oct 1889 ***Robert Henry Tapson*** *22 Bachelor Cabman*
13 Saltash Street (Father: Robert Tapson, Miner)
Louisa Hill *22 Spinster*
4 Norley Street (Father: William Hill, Master Mariner)
by Banns in the presence of Margaret Sanders Beckerley & William Weekes

The baptism of the first son of Robert Henry and Louisa took place in the church of St. Andrew, Plymouth, where they had been married:

25 Jan 1891 Archibald Robert Henry son of Robert Henry & Louisa Tapson
Gibbon Street, Driver (born 26 December 1890).

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)



DESCENDANTS OF ROBERT TAPSON OF WALKHAMPTON & OPORTO (B#83)

CHAPTER 10

LATER DESCENDANTS OF THE JOHN TAPSONS OF FREESABEARE & SUNDRY STRAYS

10.1 THE SOUTH PETHERWIN PARISH REGISTERS

The earliest mention of a Tapson in the parish registers of South Petherwin, Cornwall, is the baptismal entry on 25 January 1736/7 for a daughter of James and Margaret Tapson, whose marriage had been recorded in the parish register of Bradstone church, Devonshire:

James Tapson and Margaret Hambley were married June 15 1736;

The James Tapson baptized on 23 November 1703 at Tavistock Abbey Chapel, (page 123), the youngest son of John III of Freesabeare, Buckland Monachorum, would have been 33 years old at the time of this marriage; it will soon become apparent that he was the James Tapson of South Petherwin.

At a later date some of the Stowford Tapsons had associations with South Petherwin, which is the parish immediately to the south-west of the parish of Launceston, and Ebsworthy Tapson, the youngest son of William Tapson of Stowford, was already living there at the time of his marriage on 9 November 1786 (page 206) to a daughter of James Tapson of South Petherwin and of his second wife, Esther. Tapson entries in the South Petherwin parish registers, which survive from 1656, are now listed, those entries labelled **(S)** refer to members of the Stowford family, and these have already been discussed in Chapter 6. The first part of this chapter presents an account of the descendants of the South Petherwin branch of the Tapson family, followed by an account of the Black Torrington branch: it will be shown that John III moved from Freesabeare to Black Torrington not long after the baptism of James in 1703.

The second part of this chapter collects together such information as exists about individuals or small branches of the Tapson family living, for the most part, in the Nineteenth Century, for whom there is (as yet) insufficient evidence for positive identification, though it seems probable that some, if not most, were descendants of the Bridestowe Tapsons. What is quite amazing is how few there are in this category of *Sundry Strays*; however, since some of them may have descendants still alive today who bear the Tapson name (though probably not in the UK) it is hoped that it may eventually be possible to identify them with certainty. The names of a few more unidentified strays appear in the appendices.

South Petherwin Marriages from 1656 to 1875

20 Jun 1753 ***James Tapson & Esther Jordan***

25 May 1773 ***William Congdon*** *of the Parish of St. Thomas &* ***Mary Tapson*** *of this Parish*
by Banns in the presence of James Tapson & Elizabeth Congdon

20 Mar 1780 ***James Mason & Joanna Tapson*** *both of this Parish*
by Banns in the presence of James Tapson & William Mason

26 Apr 1785 ***James Tapson*** *of this Parish Bachelor &* ***Mary Gregory*** *of the same Parish Spinster*
by Banns in the presence of William Gregory & William Tapson

9 Nov 1786 ***Ebsworthy Tapson*** *a Resident of this Parish &*
Catherine Tapson *of the same Parish Spinster by Licence*
in the presence of James Tapson, John Honder(?) & William Tapson **(S)**

3 Jan 1801 ***Richard Congdon*** *of this Parish Taylor &* ***Mary Tapson*** *Widow of this Parish*
by Banns in the presence of Mary Gregory & William Harvey

8 Nov 1814 ***James Mason*** *of the Parish of St Mary Magdalene &*
Elizabeth Tapson *of the Parish of South Petherwin*
by Banns in the presence of Jas. Smith & John Jeffery **(S)**

5 Mar 1815 ***John Jeffery*** *of the Parish of South Petherwin &*
Esther Tapson *of the Parish of South Petherwin*
by Banns in the presence of Jas. Smith & George Denham Congdon **(S)**

27 Jan 1820 ***Edmund Gregory Tapson*** *of the Parish of South Petherwin &*
Caroline Harvey *of the Parish of South Petherwin*
by Banns in the presence of John Harvey & Will^{m} Harvey

6 Dec 1836 ***Ebsworthy Tapson****, Bachelor of the Parish of Stowford, &*
Catherine Lang*, Spinster of the Parish of South Petherwin,*
by Banns in the presence of Caroline ..... & John Tapson **(S)**

South Petherwin Baptisms from 1656 to 1875

25	*Jan*	*1736*	*Jane*	*dau of James & Marg^{t} Tapson*
2	*Feb*	*1737*	*Elizth*	*dau of James & Margaret Tapson*
6	*Jan*	*1739*	*John*	*son of James & Margaret Tapson*
15	*Jan*	*1754*	*Mary*	*dau of James & Esther Tapson*
17	*Dec*	*1755*	*Joanna*	*dau of James & Esther Tapson*
8	*Mar*	*1758*	*James*	*son of James & Esther Tapson*
31	*Jan*	*1760*	*William*	*son of James & Esther Tapson*
6	*Apr*	*1762*	*Catherine*	*dau of James & Esther Tapson*
24	*Apr*	*1770*	*Ann*	*dau of James & Hester Tapson*
10	*Jan*	*1786*	*William*	*son of James & Mary Tapson*
20	*Sep*	*1787*	*James*	*son of James & Mary Tapson*
12	*Feb*	*1788*	*Elizth*	*dau of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson* **(S)**
30	*Jun*	*1789*	*Ann*	*dau of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson* **(S)**
7	*Jul*	*1789*	*Edmund Gregory*	*son of James & Mary Tapson*
12	*Nov*	*1793*	*Esther*	*dau of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson* **(S)**
10	*May*	*1795*	*Rebecca*	*dau of James & Mary Tapson*
11	*Oct*	*1795*	*William*	*son of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson* **(S)**
20	*May*	*1806*	*Robert*	*son of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson* **(S)**
12	*May*	*1844*	*James*	*son of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson, Trevozah, Farmer* **(S)**

South Petherwin Burials from 1656 to 1875

23	*Feb*	*1736*	*Jane*	*dau of James & Margaret Tapson*	
7	*Jan*	*1739*	*John*	*son of James & Margaret Tapson*	
25	*Apr*	*1750*	*Margaret*	*Wife of James Tapson*	
17	*Jan*	*1777*	*James Tapson*		
22	*May*	*1782*	*Ann Tapson*		
25	*Nov*	*1785*	*Esther Tapson, Widow*		
2	*Dec*	*1813*	*Robert Tapson*	*Honiton*	*8* (S)
17	*Jun*	*1816*	*Ebsworthy Tapson*	*Honiton*	*56* (S)
7	*Nov*	*1817*	*W^{m} Tapson*	*Launceston*	*22* (S)
24	*Feb*	*1818*	*Catherine Tapson*	*Honiton*	*55* (S)
29	*Jan*	*1826*	*Elizabeth Tapson*	*Launceston*	*1* (S)

10.2 JAMES TAPSON OF SOUTH PETHERWIN

Of the three children, Jane, Elizabeth and John, of James and his first wife, Margaret, only Elizabeth survived infancy. She was married at Lifton:

9 Jan 1766 ***Jonathan Bollon & Elizabeth Tapson*** *both of this parish*
by Banns in the presence of Hester Tapson & John Vance Dane(?)

Elizabeth would have been about 29 years old at the time: that this was her wedding is confirmed by the fact that one of the witnesses was her step-mother, James's second wife.

Of the six children of James and Esther, the youngest, Ann, died at the age of 12; the other three daughters were all married at South Petherwin, Catherine marrying Ebsworthy Tapson of Stowford (page 206). Joanna was only 27 years old when she was buried at South Petherwin:

25 Sep 1783 ***Joanna****, Wife of James Mason*

James and Esther both made wills; they were proved in the Consistory Court of the Bishop of Exeter (page 21), and so were destroyed during World War II. James, the youngest son of John III of Freesabeare, would have been about 73 years old when James Tapson of South Petherwin was buried in 1777.

10.3 JAMES TAPSON (JUNIOR) OF SOUTH PETHERWIN

The eldest son, James, of James and Esther married Mary Gregory at South Petherwin, where four of their children were baptized. The website of the *Online Parish Clerks Cornwall* (*www.cornwall-opc.org/par* — images unavailable) records the baptism:

Priscilla Tapson baptized 2/5/1793 in the parish of North Hill
Parents: James (Yeoman) & Mary. Residence: Church Town

and the burial:

James Tapson buried 16/3/1796 at St Gluvias . Age 39

North Hill parish is to the immediate south-west of South Petherwin parish. St Gluvias is the parish church of Penryn, near Falmouth; possibly James had moved there to work in the famous granite quarry at Penryn (which provided the stone for the original Waterloo Bridge, London, built in 1811-17). James's widow, Mary, married Richard Congdon at South Petherwin on 3 January 1801.

Rebecca, the younger daughter of James and Mary, would have been 24 years old at the time of her marriage in the church of St James, Westminster (CWAC):

16 Jul 1819 ***John Lawrence*** *of this Parish &* ***RebeccaTapson*** *of this Parish*
by Banns in the presence of William Sharp & Priscilla Tapson

A witness, Rebecca's sister Priscilla, married James Smith at Tilehurst, near Reading, on 20 June 1829.

10.4 WILLIAM TAPSON OF CHELSEA, CARPENTER

William, the eldest son of James and Mary, married when he was 27 years old in the church of St. John, Glastonbury, Somersetshire:

5 Jan 1813 ***William Tapson*** *Bachelor &* ***Sarah Tucker*** *Spinster both of this Parish by Licence in the presence of David West & James Brooke*

The second child of William and Sarah was baptized in the same church:

18 Aug 1815 Edmund son of William & Sarah Tapson, Glastonbury, Carpenter

and was buried there two months later:

25 Oct 1815 Edmund Tapson Glastonbury Infant

On the same day the eldest child was baptized, and another son was baptized the following year, both at St. John's:

25 Oct 1815 John son of William & Sarah Tapson, Glastonbury, Carpenter (born July 1813)

27 Sep 1816 Edmund son of William & Sarah Tapson, Glastonbury, Carpenter

William then moved with with his wife and two surviving sons to London, where they settled in Chelsea. The next baptism was in the church of St. James, Westminster (CWAC):

8 Sep 1820 Ann Catherine dau of William & Sarah Tapson, New(?) Road, Chelsea Carpenter (born 12 August)

The remaining baptisms were in the church of St. Luke, Chelsea (GLRO):

20 Aug 1823 Edmund Gregory son of William & Sarah Tapson, Cumberland Street Carpenter (born 16 August 1816)

23 Nov 1825 Ann Caroline dau of William & Sarah Tapson, Cumberland Street Carpenter (born 13 June 1819)

23 Nov 1825 Susan dau of William & Sarah Tapson, Cumberland Street Carpenter (born 2 March 1825)

20 Nov 1833 William Henry son of William & Sarah Tapson, Cumberland Street Carpenter (born 21 May 1826)

20 Nov 1833 George Joseph son of William & Sarah Tapson, Cumberland Street Carpenter (born 11 July 1831)

20 Nov 1833 Georgina Priscilla dau of William & Sarah Tapson, Cumberland Street Carpenter (born ?1 May 1833)

The church of St. Luke, where Charles Dickens was married in 1836, was built between 1820 and 1824 and replaced Chelsea Old Church as the parish church of Chelsea in 1824, so Edmund Gregory would have been baptized in Chelsea Old Church. Edmund Gregory, to judge from the date given for his birth, must have been the Edmund baptized on 27 September 1816 at Glastonbury; possibly William and Sarah had forgotten that he had already been baptized. However, Ann Catherine and Ann Caroline seem to have been different daughters, Ann Catherine, who was the first to be baptized, being the younger of the two; perhaps she was baptized soon after birth because it was feared she might not live. As for the other children, they had to wait until William and Sarah had collected a few more before being baptized together as a job lot. •

John, the eldest son of William and Sarah, was 26 years old when his death was registered in 1840, Q2 (St. George, Hanover Square, R.D.); administration of his estate, valued at £20, was granted to his father in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury (PRO PROB6/219 Fo. 364):

Administration of the Estate of John Tapson dated 25 July 1843

On the twenty fifth day Administration of the Goods Chattels and Credits of John Tapson formerly a Private of Marines in the Portugese Service but late of Oakham Street Chelsea in the County of Middlesex Bachelor deceased was granted to William Tapson the natural and lawful Father of the said Deceased having been first sworn duly to Administer

• See Appendix VI (Addenda) & Appendix VII (Further Addenda)

10.6 EDMUND GREGORY TAPSON OF CHELSEA, LATH RENDER

The marriage at South Petherwin (page 340) on 27 January 1820 of Edmund Gregory, the third son of James and Mary Tapson of South Petherwin, to Caroline Harvey was followed by two baptisms in the parish church of Boyton, some six miles north of South Petherwin village:

15 Mar 1821 Mary — dau of Edmund & Caroline Tapson, Boyton town, Publican
9 Aug 1822 Joanna — dau of Edmund & Caroline Tapson, Boyton town, Publican

and by a baptism in Launceston parish church:

31 Aug 1824 James — son of Edmund & Caroline Tapson, Church Street, Victualler

and then by two baptisms in the church of St. Luke, Chelsea:

10 Jun 1832 James — son of Edmund Gregory & Caroline Tapson, D'Oyley Street, Lath Render (born 24 August 1826)
10 Jun 1832 William — son of Edmund Gregory & Caroline Tapson, D'Oyley Street, Lath Render (born 12 April 1831)

The move from Cornwall to Chelsea was accompanied by a change of occupation from publican to lath render (the plasterer in buildings of lath and plaster construction), perhaps the trade for which Edmund Gregory was originally trained. The age given for James in subsequent census returns and on his death certificate are consistent with his having been born about 1824. It seems therefore that the James baptized at Chelsea was the same James who had already been baptized at Launceston, rather than another son given the same name; there is no burial entry either at Launceston or at South Petherwin for an earlier James. One surmises that Edmund Gregory and Caroline forgot that he had already been baptized, and that they also got his date of birth wrong in the Chelsea register.

All the children except Joanna are shown in the 1841 census return for Chelsea (PRO HO107/688/15 Fo. 52), in which the enumerator should have given only age-bands for the adults:

George Street

Edmund Tapson	*53*	*Lath render*	*Not born in Middlesex*
Caroline Tapson	*44*		*Not born in Middlesex*
James Tapson	*16*	*Plasterer I*	*Not born in Middlesex*
Mary Tapson	*20*		*Not born in Middlesex*
William Tapson	*10*		*Born in Middlesex*

Edmund Gregory would have been close to his 52nd birthday, but the ages of the children are correct.

Mary was married in the church of St. Luke, Chelsea:

7 Feb 1845 ***William Thomas Perkins Venn*** *A minor Bachelor Plasterer*
78 George St., Chelsea (Father: James Venn, Mason)
Mary Congdon Tapson *Full Spinster*
73 George St., Chelsea (Father: Edmund Tapson, Lath render)
by Banns in the presence of Edmund Tapson & M. A. Cusier(?)

Mary's second name, not entered in her baptismal entry, was the new surname of her grandmother, Mary Congdon, after her second marriage (page 341).

<u>The Will of Edmund Gregory Tapson dated 28 May 1850</u>

I Edmund Tapson of No 73 Lower George Street in the Parish of Saint Luke Chelsea in the County of Middlesex do on this 28th day of May in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty give and bequeath unto my eldest Son James Tapson all my interest in the Leases of the five houses situate Nos 71, 72, 73, 74 and 75 Lower George Street in the Parish and County aforesaid Also the business carried on by me in my life time together with all the tools and utensils used therein as well as whatever debts may be due to me and all the furniture plate and money I may be possesssed of at the time of my death. The said James Tapson is to pay all the rates taxes and impositions on the said houses And the said James Tapson is to pay to my youngest son William Tapson the sum of £5 per annum (dating from the day of my decease) during the term of the Leases of the said houses and also the said James Tapson is to pay to my Daughter Mary Venn the Wife of William Venn the sum of £20 per annum ..... In witness whereof I the said Edmund Tapson have set my hand ..... Edmund Tapson

The register of St. Luke, Chelsea, records the burials:

27 Aug 1849	*Caroline Tapson*	*George Street*	*50*
21 Jun 1850	*Edmund Gregory Tapson*	*George Street*	*63*

Edmund Gregory would have been about 61 years old. His will (GLRO) was proved on 25 June 1850 in the Consistory Court of London *by the Oath of James Tapson Son of the said Deceased the sole Executor.* Edmund Gregory's estate was valued at £200.

10.7 JAMES TAPSON OF CHELSEA, LATH RENDER

It will soon be shown that James, the elder son of Edmund Gregory and Caroline, married Elizabeth Jane Farmiloe on 23 June 1844 at Battersea parish church. The birth of the only child of James and Caroline, James Gregory, was registered (St. George, Hanover Square, R.D.) in 1848, Q2; a burial service was held for him in the church of St. George, Hanover Square:

13 Aug 1848 James Gregory Tapson Whittaker St. 4 months

James, who had been described as a plasterer in 1841 (page 345), had taken over the business and was living in the home of his recently deceased father by the time of the 1851 census for Chelsea (PRO HO107/1472 Fo. 520):

73 George St

James Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*26*	*Lath render*	*Cornwall, Launceston*
Jane Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*24*		*Gloucestersh., ...(?)*
Caroline Venn	*Niece*		*5*		*Middlesex, Chelsea*
Henry LeGuay(?)		*Un*	*18*	*Apprentice*	*„ „*

James's age and place of birth are correctly recorded. Caroline Venn was clearly a daughter of James's sister Mary Congdon Venn. Kelly's London directories of 1862 and 1871 list James's business:

Tapson James, Lath render, 73 Lower George st, Chelsea SW

On 20 February 1863 Elizabeth Jane filed a petition for divorce; apparently she was already living apart from her husband, for the divorce document (PRO J77/56/79) is headed *The Petition of Elizabeth Jane Tapson of N° 5 Oxford Street Whitechapel in the County of Middlesex.* The petition recounts that Elizabeth Jane Farmiloe, Spinster, married James Tapson on 23 June 1844 at the Parish Church, Battersea, Surrey. They lived at 72 George Street, Chelsea, at 5 Whittaker Street, Pimlico, at 1 Little George Street, Chelsea, and at 73 George Street, Chelsea. The issue of the marriage was one child only, a son since dead. The petitioner alleged that on divers occasions in 1861 and 1862 James Tapson had violently assaulted her, and that on divers occasions during 1858, 1859 and 1860 he had committed incestuous adultery with the petitioner's niece, Caroline Jemima Richmond. In his reply, dated 23 May 1863, the respondent, James Tapson, denied acts of cruelty, denied adultery, and asked the court to reject the petition. In spite of James's protestations of innocence, twin sons, James and Willie, had been born on 2 July 1862. Their birth certificates state that they were born at 6 Church Road, Battersea, and name the father as *James Tapson, Lath Render Master* and the mother as *Caroline Jemima Tapson, formerly Richmond*. James and Caroline were obviously not married! Willie's death was registered in the same quarter, 1862, Q3.

The judgement of the court was dated 13 November 1863: *On the Cause being called and neither the Petitioner nor any person on her behalf appearing the Judge Ordinary ordered that the Cause be struck out of the List of Causes for Hearing*. Elizabeth was still living with James at the time of the 1871 census for Chelsea (PRO RG10/78 Fo. 13), so there must have been a reconciliation:

73 Lower George St.

James Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*46*	*Fire Wood Merchant*	*Cornwall*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*44*		*Gloucestershire*
Catherine F. Cox	*Servant*	*Un*	*19*	*Servant*	*Middlesex, Chelsea*

Elizabeth Jane would have been about 53 years old when the death of a *Jane Tapson, aged 53* was registered in 1880, Q3 (Barnet R.D.); the death certificate would confirm whether or not she was James's wife. She had been named as Jane in the 1851 census but as Elizabeth in the 1871 census.

The 1881 census return for Chelsea (PRO RG11/79 Fo. 47) shows James living alone:

73 Lower George St.

James Tapson Head Widr 56 Fire Wood Dealer Cornwall

James's new business shown in these census returns is listed in Kelly's 1882 London directory:

Jewell & Tapson, firewood dealers, 73 Lower George st, Chelsea SW

James's death was registered (Chelsea R.D.) in 1885, Q3, his age being given as 60; he would have been close to his 61st birthday.

10.8 WILLIAM TAPSON OF CHELSEA & BATTERSEA, LATH RENDER

At the time of the 1851 census return for Chelsea (PRO HO107/1472 Fo. 511) the younger son of Edmund Gregory and Caroline was living alone, apparently in an apartment:

41 George St.

William Tapson Lodger Un 22 Lath render Middlesex, Chelsea

William was then only 20 years old. The following year, in 1852, Q4, his marriage to Rachel Stracey was registered (Lambeth R.D.). Edmund James, the first child of William and Rachel, was born on 10 May 1854; his birth certificate gives his place of birth as 74 George Street, Chelsea, and names his father as *William Tapson, Lath Render* and his mother as *Rachel Tapson, formerly Stracey*.

The William whose birth was registered in 1858, Q4 (Chelsea R.D.) was probably another son of William and Rachel, because William's cousin Edmund Gregory, who was also raising a family in Chelsea at the time, had named a child *William Charles* two years before (page 344); the *William Tapson* whose death was registered (Chelsea R.D.) in 1860, Q2, could have been either of these children, but is more likely to have been Edmund Gregory's son William Charles, since it seems to have been William's son William who was included in the 1881 census (page 348), though the death certificate would be needed for confirmation.

As already mentioned (page 344), the George Tapson whose birth and death were both registered (Chelsea R.D.) in 1860, Q4 was probably a son of Edmund Gregory, whose wife also died in the same quarter; moreover, as the 1881 census informs us (page 348), William and Rachel had a son Roland born about this time, but his birth was not registered.

The births of four daughters of William and Rachel were the next to be registered (Chelsea R.D.): Rachel Jane in 1864, Q1; Harriett in 1866, Q3; and twins, Constance Caroline and Jane, in 1869, Q4. Jane's death was registered in 1870, Q2 (Wandsworth R.D.), her age given as 0.

Jane's death in the Wandsworth registration district signals the family's move from Chelsea to Battersea, which is close to Chelsea but south of the Thames. A son, Charles, was born, according to his birth certificate, on 10 January 1872 at 29 Henley Street, Battersea. He was followed by another daughter, Jane Gregory, whose birth was registered (Wandsworth R.D.) in 1874, Q2. The Elizabeth Tapson whose birth was registered (Wandsworth R.D.) in 1877, Q2, was probably another daughter of William and Rachel, though her birth certificate would be needed for confirmation since she died before the 1881 census; her death was registered (Wandsworth R.D.) in 1878, Q3. However, Frederick, whose birth was registered in 1879, Q4 (Wandsworth R.D.), was certainly their son.

Further births were subsequently registered in the Wandsworth registration district, but it is not known if any were of children of William and Rachel; some may have been the births of their grandchildren. However, the 1881 census for Battersea (PRO RG11/648 Fo. 45) provides the necessary confirmation that the six children who were still living at home at the time of the census were their children; like his grandfather, his father and his uncle James before him, Roland had become a lath render:

57 Carpenters Rd	*Parish of St. (?)Lerwins*				
William Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*50*	*Lath Render*	*Middx, Chelsea*
Rachael Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*47*		*Sussex*
Roland Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*20*	*Lath Render*	*Middx, Chelsea*
Harriet Tapson	*Dau*		*15*	*Servant Domestic*	*„ „*
Constance Tapson	*Dau*		*12*	*Scholar*	*„ „*
Charles Tapson	*Son*		*10*	*„*	*Surrey, Battersea*
Jane Tapson	*Dau*		*7*	*„*	*„ „*
Fred Tapson	*Son*		*2*		*„ „*

The correct age is given for William's daughter Rachel on Folio 144 of the same census return:

Parkside St.					
.....					
Rachel Tapson	*Serv*	*Un*	*17*	*General Servant*	*Middlesex*

The marriage of Edmund James had been registered in 1876, Q2 (Chelsea R.D.) and the birth of his son James Henry G. Tapson was registered in 1879, Q2 (Chelsea R.D.). The family are shown in the 1881 census return for Chelsea (PRO RG11/87 Fo. 86):

11 Draycott Place					
Edmund J. Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*27*	*Carpenter, Woodcutter*	*Middlesex, Chelsea*
Emily Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*22*		*Sussex, Brighton*
James H. Tapson	*Son*		*2*		*Middlesex, Chelsea*

And it would appear to have been William's son who was included in the 1881 census return for Battersea (PRO RG11/649 Fo. 67); he too had become a lath render and was living with another lath render and his family:

57 Henley St.					
Daniel M. Ballam(?)	*Head*	*Mar*	*28*	*Lath Render*	*Hants, Southampton*
.....					
William Tapson	*Boarder*	*Un*	*23*	*Lath Render*	*Middlesex, Chelsea*

The deaths were registered (Wandsworth R.D.) of William in 1889, Q2, and of Rachel in 1891, Q3. William's age was correctly given as 58; and Rachel's age was given as 57, which is consistent with that recorded in the 1881 census. Constance Caroline would have been 21 years old in 1890, Q4, when the death was registered (Kensington R.D.) of *Constance Caroline Tapson, aged 22*.

Harriet's marriage was registered in 1887, Q2 (Chelsea R.D.), and Charles's marriage in 1899, Q3 (Wandsworth R.D.); and the *Rowland P. C. Tapson* whose marriage was registered in 1903, Q4 (Paddington R.D.) may have been the son of William and Rachel listed in the 1881 census return, who would then have been about 43 years old.● Two more of William's children were married in the church of St. Faith at Stoke Newington, which is to the north-east of the City of London:

27 Oct 1901	***Frederick Tapson***	*24*	*Bachelor*	*Baker*
	8 Londesboro' Rd	*(Father: William Tapson, Lath render)*		
	Matilda Greeve	*25*	*Widow*	
	19 Londesboro' Rd	*(Father: Richard Langford, Photographer)*		
	by banns in the presence of Rachel Tapson, Albert Butler & C. H. V. Pixell			
21 Dec 1902	***Samuel George Stenton***	*36*	*Widower*	*Lamp-trimmer*
	19 Londesboro' Rd	*(Father: Samuel John Stenton, Lamp-trimmer)*		
	Rachel Tapson	*37*	*Spinster*	
	12 Londesboro' Rd	*(Father: William Tapson, Lath render)*		
	by banns in the presence of Frederick Tapson, Harriet Tapson & C. H. V. Pixell			

Londesborough Road is west of Stoke Newington High Street. The identity of Harriet Tapson, one of the witnesses, is something of a mystery, since Rachel's sister Harriet, as already noted, had herself been married in 1887; the most likely explanation is that a clerical error was made, her maiden name being written instead of her married name.

● See Appendix VI (Addenda)

10.9 JAMES TAPSON OF LIFTON, LABOURER

A wedding in the parish church of Lifton:

16 Nov 1817 ***James Tapson*** *Bachelor of this Parish &*
Elizabeth Gay *Spinster of this Parish*
by Banns in the presence of John Gay & (?)Jonah Bullen

was followed by a baptism at Bratton Clovelly:

15 Feb 1818 Mary *dau of James & Elizabeth Tapson, Bratton Town, Lab[r]*

by a baptism at Lifton:

29 Jun 1820 Elizabeth *dau of James & Elizabeth Tapson, Cawdron, Soldier*

by two baptisms at Bridestowe (page 131):

7 Nov 1822 Jane *dau of James Tapson, Labourer, & Elizabeth*
30 Oct 1825 Priscilla *dau of James Tapson, Labourer, & Elizabeth*

and by three more baptisms at Lifton:

14 Feb 1828 James *son of James & Elizabeth Tapson, Cawdron, Labourer in Husbandry*
16 May 1830 William *son of James & Elizabeth Tapson, Cawdron, Labourer in Husbandry*
26 Aug 1832 John *son of James & Elizabeth Tapson, Cawdron, Labourer in Husbandry*

Two burials were registered at Lifton:

18 Jan 1830 Jane Tapson *Cawdron* *7*
21 Aug 1835 James Tapson *Cawdron* *48*

James, the second son of James and Mary Tapson baptized at South Petherwin on 20 September 1787 (page 340), would have been close to his 48th birthday when James Tapson of Cawdron was buried. That they were one and the same person seems highly likely, though there is no further direct evidence to corroborate this assumption; however, no evidence has yet come to light of another James Tapson, of the right age, to whom this burial might refer. Moreover, the distance between the villages of South Petherwin, in Cornwall, and Lifton, in Devonshire, is no more than half a dozen miles. James the son of James and Mary had a sister Priscilla (page 341); that James Tapson of Cawdron should have named a daughter Priscilla may therefore be significant indirect evidence of his identity.

The 1841 census return for Lifton (PRO HO107/232/11 Fo. 6) shows that William was working as a male servant with a farmer, John Doidge, and his family:

Paulstone

John Doidge	*45-49*	*Farmer*	*Born in Devonshire*
.....			
William Tapson	*11*	*M. S.*	*Born in Devonshire*

And on Folio 4 of the same census return John was included in the household of another farmer, Henry Down, and his family:

Coombe

Henry Down	*25-29*	*Farmer*	*Born in Devonshire*
.....			
John Tapson	*8*	*M. S.*	*Born in Devonshire*

The correct ages for the two boys were given.•

James's widow was listed, in another Lifton return (PRO HO107/232/13 Fo. 10), as a female servant in the household of a cordwainer, John Hamly:

Fore Street

John Hamly	*51*	*Cordwainer*	*Not born in Devonshire*
John Hamly	*14*	*Cordwainer*	*Born in Devonshire*
Thomas Hamly	*12*		*Born in Devonshire*
Elizabeth Tapson	*44*	*F.S.*	*Born in Devonshire* •

•See Appendix VI (Addenda).

Priscilla was married at Stoke Damerel:

15 Mar 1849 ***George Harvey*** *35* *Bachelor* *Marine*
Barracks *(Father: Richard Harvey, Labourer)*
Priscilla Tapson *24* *Spinster*
59 Pembroke St. *(Father: James Tapson, Labourer)*
by Banns in the presence of Richard Harvey & Grace Algar

James's eldest daughter, Mary, was working in Exeter in 1851; the census return for the parish of Holy Trinity, Exeter (PRO HO107/1868 Fo. 501) includes her in the household of James John S. Burr, a priest of Exeter cathedral:

3 Colleton Crescent

.....

Mary Tapson *Serv* *Un* *31* *Cook* *Devon, Bratton Clovelly*

Mary's sister Elizabeth was also working in Exeter at the time of the 1851 census; she was included in the household of Henry Dicken, a Royal Navy lieutenant on half pay, in the return for the Exeter parish of Heavitree (PRO HO107/1866 Fo. 334):

6 Regents Park

.....

Elizabeth Tapson *Serv* *Un* *30* *House Servant* *Devon, Lifton*

Two years later she had a son baptized in the church of St. Sidwell, Exeter:

26 Jul 1853 *Edwin* *son of Elizabeth Tapson, Gatty's Court, Single Woman*

Edwin was married in the church of St. Andrew, Plymouth:

6 Jun 1879 ***Edwin Tapson*** *24* *Bachelor* *Brass Finisher*
Collumpton *(Father: ----------)*
Laura Gliddon *23* *Spinster*
34 Whimple Street *(Father: Thomas Gliddon, Carpenter)*
by Banns in the presence of Richard James Clouter(?) & Bessie Gliddon

The birth of George Edwin, the first child of Edwin and Laura, was registered (Tiverton R.D.) in 1880, Q3, and the family is shown in the 1881 census (PRO RG11/2233 Fo. 53) for Cullompton:

Cockpit Hill

Edwin Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*27*	*Brass Finisher in Axle Works*	*Devon, Exeter*
Laura Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*24*	*Stay Maker*	*„ Plymouth*
George E. Tapson	*Son*		*8 mo.*		*„ Cullompton*

The 1881 census return for Lifton (PRO RG11/2221 Fo. 47) shows Mary back in that parish and living with her mother:

North Road

Elizabeth Down	*Head*	*Wid*	*84*		*Devon, Bratton Clovelly*
Mary Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*63*	*Dom Serv Retired*	*„ „ „*

The age given for Elizabeth is consistent with that recorded at the time of the 1841 census. Elizabeth had not remarried in 1841, and a subsequent marriage to Down does not seem to have been registered.• She was buried in James's grave, and the headstone states that she died on 18 December 1884 aged 87 years. Mary died on 28 November 1900 at Lifton aged 82 years, though her death certificate,* which says she was of *independent means* and died of *a cerebral hæmorrhage*, gives her age as 81 years. The sole legatee of her will, proved at Exeter on 22 December 1900, was her nephew, Edwin Tapson.

<u>The Will of Mary Tapson dated 7 November 1900</u>

This is the last Will and Testament of me Mary Tapson of North Road in the Parish of Lifton County of Devon made this seventh day of November in the year of our Lord One thousand and nine hundred..... I hereby devise and bequeath all moneys and chattels in my possession unto Edwin Tapson of 17 Ebrington Road S[t] Thomas Exeter Devon for his sole use. *Mary Tapson (her mark)*

*Reported by Mrs. Pauline Johnson, Superintendent Registrar at Tavistock.

•See Appendix VI (Addenda).

10.10 THE TAPSONS OF BLACK TORRINGTON

The arrival of a member of the Tapson family in Black Torrington, about eight miles to the east of the market town of Holsworthy, is signalled by a baptismal entry in the register of that parish:

2 Oct 1709 Joseph son of John Tapson

This Joseph would have been 15 years old at the time of the burial in Black Torrington:

17 Apr 1725 Joseph Tapson

It will soon become apparent that John was John III of Freesabeare,* who had five children baptized at Tavistock in the Presbyterian Abbey Chapel: John in 1696, Elizabeth in 1698, Mary in 1699, William in 1702 and James in 1703 (page 123). John III, who left Freesabeare about the turn of the century, had a brother, just under two years younger than himself, whose name was Joseph, an unusual name in the Tapson family at that time; this Joseph died soon after his eleventh birthday (page 7), so after moving to Black Torrington, John obviously named his next child Joseph after his younger brother; his baptism at Black Torrington took place six years after James's baptism in Tavistock Abbey Chapel. Black Torrington is about 24 miles north of Buckland Monachorum.

Two years after this Joseph's death a marriage was solemnized at Black Torrington:

26 Aug 1727 ***Thomas Rockey & Elizabeth Tapson***

It is clear that Elizabeth was the elder daughter of John III of Freesabeare (John I of Black Torrington), and that it was his eldest son who had been married four years before at Thrushelton, about eleven miles to the south of Black Torrington:

2 May 1723 ***John Tapson*** *of Blacktorington &* ***Joan Maynard*** *by Banns*

John would have been 26 years old at the time of his marriage, and Elizabeth just 29 years old at the time of hers. John's younger daughter Mary would have been 33 years old when a marriage was recorded in the bishop's transcript for Highampton, the parish immediately east of Black Torrington:

14 Aug 1733 ***John Gill & Mary Tapshan***

As already recorded (page 339) John's son James and his first wife Margaret Hambley settled in South Petherwin, some eighteen miles south-west of Black Torrington, after their marriage. It may be significant in further establishing the identity of James Tapson of South Petherwin as a son of John III of Freesabeare that John III had a sister Priscilla (page 5) who died aged 9 months (page 7), a name appearing elsewhere in the Tapson family only in the South Petherwin branch. However, no marriage (or burial) entry has so far come to light for John's other son, William. One possibility is that he may have been the ship's carpenter of whom details are recorded on pages 101/2. If so, he would have been 24 years old when he was granted his first warrant as Carpenter of the Alborough, and 44 years when he was killed in a tragic accident on board the Royal Oak. But, in the absence of any further evidence, this must remain as only a possibility.

Catherine, the wife of John III of Freesabeare was buried at Black Torrington:

25 Apr 1745 Katharine Tapson

No burial entry for John has yet been found in the Black Torrington register, which was arranged alphabetically by forenames over a long period of time, a system not always very accurately adhered to by successive incumbents.

The 1723 wedding of John II of Black Torrington and Joan Maynard at Thrushelton (above) was followed by two baptisms, eleven months apart, at Black Torrington:

3 Apr 1724 John son of John Tapson
7 Mar 1724 Grace dau of John Tapson

John II and Joan seem to have settled in Thrushelton by 1732, the year of a baptism in that parish:

12 Nov 1732 Mary dau of John Tapson & Joan

The Thrushelton register subsequently records the three burials:

4 Apr 1743 Elizabeth Tapson
12 Sep 1743 John Tapson
15 Sep 1747 Mary Tapson

*The Freesabeare branch of the family tree is facing page 126.

It seems to have been John III of Black Torrington then 23 years old, who was married just over three miles from Thrushelton village at Marystow (page 166):

3 Nov 1747 ***John Tapson & Elizabeth Woodman*** *sojourners in this parish by Banns*

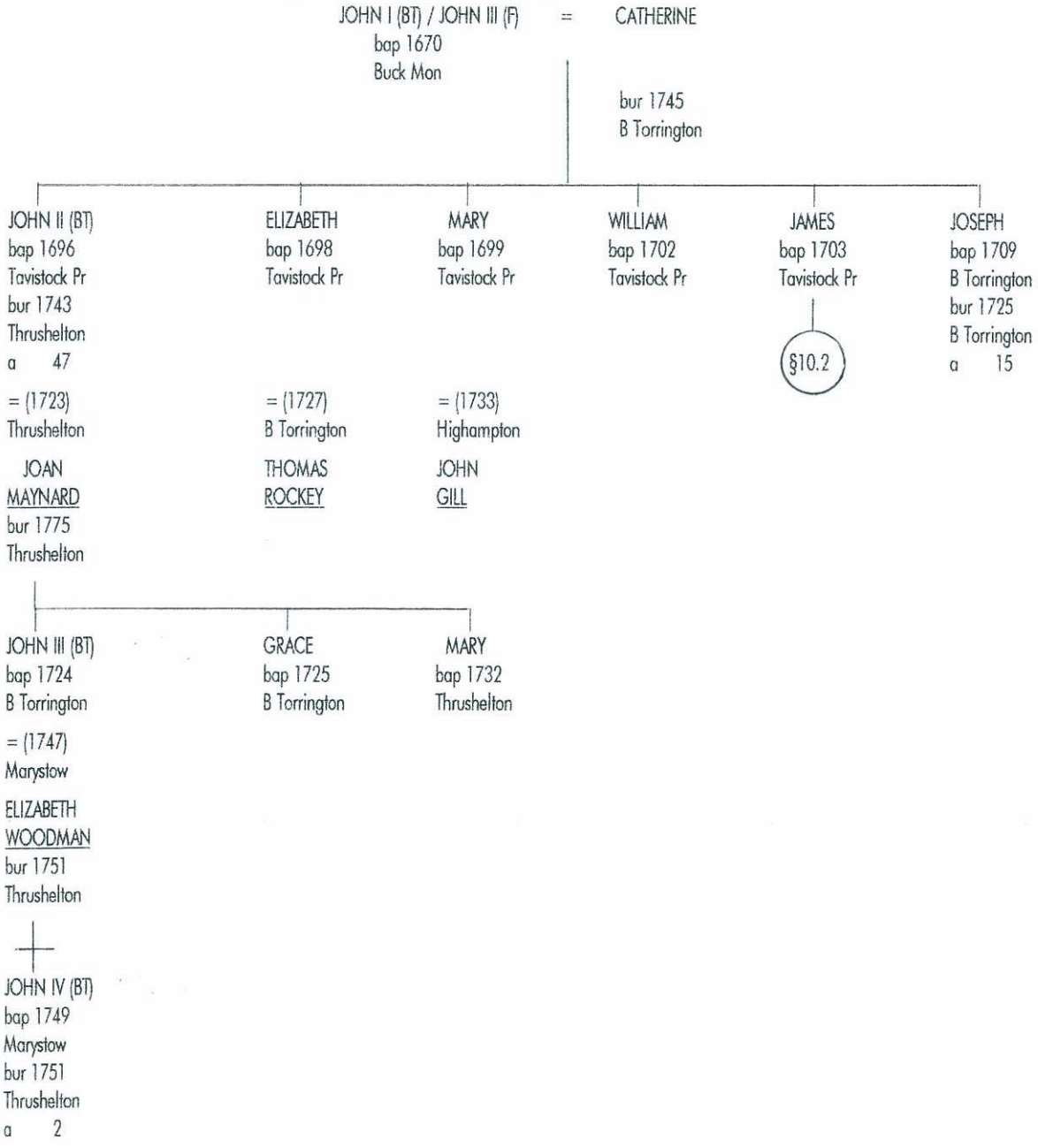
and whose son was baptized at Marystow:

6 Jul 1749 John son of John Tapson & Elizabeth

(This suggests that it was John II who had been buried at Thrushelton in 1743 and that Mary, and possibly Elizabeth as well, buried at Thrushelton in 1747 and 1743, were his daughters.) John III's child, his wife, and (probably) his mother, the widow of John II, were all buried at Thrushelton:

19 Aug 1751 John Tapson (an Infant)
18 Sep 1751 Elizabeth Tapson
7 Mar 1775 Joan Tapson

The Tapsons of Black Torrington — Very Conjectural*



*The Freesabeare branch of the family tree is facing page 126.

10.11 NICHOLAS TAPSON OF ST HELIER, CARPENTER & WHEELWRIGHT

A marriage is recorded in the register of Tavistock parish church:

26 Oct 1821 ***Nicholas Tapson*** *of the Parish of Brentor a Carpenter a Bachelor &* ***Mary Heard*** *of this Parish a Spinster by Banns in the presence of Samuel Doncy & James Cole*

The first child of Nicholas and Mary was baptized at Mary Tavy:

29 Jan 1823 Mary Ann dau of Nicholas & Mary Tapson, Westcott, Milton Abbot, Wheelwright

It would seem to be this Mary Ann whose burial is recorded in the parish register of St. Helier, Jersey, one of the Channel Islands:*

6 Jun 1825 Mary Ann Tapson dau of Nicholas

Just over a month later there was a baptism at St Helier:

31 Jul 1825 Robert son of Nicholas Tapson and Mary his wife (said father, said mother)

Four years after this baptism Nicholas's wife was buried at St. Helier:

13 Jun 1829 Mary Tapson wife of Nicholas 31 years

The only Nicholas Tapson known to have been living in Devonshire at the time of the Tavistock marriage in 1821 who has not already been accounted for was the Nicholas born in 1792 at Spry Town, Stowford, the second son of Nicholas and Mary (page 181). This Nicholas would have been 29 years old at the time of the marriage and, if the age given for her in her burial entry was correct, Mary would have been about 23 years old. Brentor, Nicholas's home at the time of his marriage, and Milton Abbot, where he and Mary were living when Mary Ann was baptized, are both within about five miles of Spry Town.

However, there is no solid evidence to support the theory that the groom in 1821 was Nicholas Tapson of Spry Town, so he has to be placed among the *Strays*. The Brentor address might even have been intended as North Brentor, in Lamerton parish, in which case the groom might have been another son, whose baptism has not yet been found, of John Tapson of Lamerton, Husbandman (page 356). A further discussion about Nicholas's possible identity appears in the next section.

No further information about Nicholas following the death of his wife has so far come to light. It may be that he and his son, Robert, went to live in France: if accurate, Robert's obituary notice (page 355) would seem to indicate this. Certainly Robert was sufficiently fluent in the French language when he eventually returned to England to be offered a post as teacher of French at a well-known independent school. Robert's teaching career is detailed in the next section.

10.12 ROBERT TAPSON OF HAMPSTEAD, FRENCH TUTOR

The 1871 census return for the parish of St. John, Hampstead (PRO RG10/194 Fo. 71) includes the household:

117 Adelaide Rd

Robert Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*45*	*French Tutor*	*Jersey, St. Helier*
Ellen C. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*36*		*Surrey, Southwark*
Ellen McCurdy	*Mother-in-Law*	*Wid*	*62*	*Annuitant*	*Surrey, Hasleydon(?)*

together with 8 *boarders* described as *scholars* (boys aged 11 - 17, including three born in India and one each in Australia and Scotland), 2 female *servants* (a *cook* and a *housemaid*) and a male *servant* (*waiter*) aged 13. Robert was listed at the same address in Kelly's London directory for 1871:

Tapson Robert, 117 Adelaide road, NW

The marriage of Robert Tapson to Ellen Catherine McCurdy had been registered at St. Pancras, London, in 1862, Q1.

*Registers searched by Mrs. Sue Bridgwater, a descendant of John Charles Tapson Junior (§8.9), whilst on holiday in Jersey.

Their circumstances remained essentially unchanged in the 1881 census return for Hampstead (PRO RG11/175 Fo. 105):

117 Adelaide Rd					
Robert Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*55*	*Schoolmaster*	*Jersey*
Ellen C. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*48*		*Mid., London*
Ellen M^{c}Curdy	*Mother Law*	*Wid*	*71*	*Private Means*	*„ „*

together with 4 *scholars* (boys, two of whom were born in Surrey, two in Jamaica) and 3 female *servants*. However, the Tapsons had moved from Adelaide Road by 1882, when their new address was given in Kelly's London directory for that year:

Tapson Robert, Montem, Elsworthy rd NW

The Will of Robert Tapson dated 8 September 1883

I Robert Tapson of "Montem" Elsworthy Road Primrose Hill in the County of Middlesex ..... bequeath to my Wife Ellen Catherine Tapson absolutely all my consumable household stores furniture books plate jewellery clothes linen china glass works of Art Musical instruments ..... and all manusrcipts and papers and all the money which I may have on a current account ..... but not any money which may be lying at any Bankers upon deposit at interest I appoint my said Wife while she shall continue my Widow and my friends Elias Robert Horton of 11 Gordon Street Gordon Square Esquire Talfourd Ely of University College London Esquire and George James Hawkes of Ealing Rise Middlesex Esquire to be my general Trustees and Executors ..... I devise and bequeath all my real and the residue of my personal estate ..... to my general Trustees in trust to pay to my said Wife ..... and after her decease to pay to her Mother if surviving her ..... all the net rents profits dividends interest and income of my said real and residuary personal estate including leaseholds and other terminable property ..... and immediately upon the decease of the survivor of them ..... to sell my real and leasehold estates and to pay the net proceeds thereof ..... to the Treasurer ..... of University College London ..... and to transfer and pay my said residuary personal estate to the said College ..... for the purposes hereinafter specified

1 Out of the net proceeds of the sale of my leasehold properties No 117 Adelaide Road and "Montem" Elsworthy Road ..... the sum of Two thousand five hundred pounds shall be invested ..... and the yearly income shall be appropriated in assisting in their education at University College School meritorious boys who may be in need of pecuniary aid for that purpose by Exhibitions to be called the "Robert Tapson Exhibitions"

2 The dividends arising from One thousand pounds Great Western Railway five per Cent Rent charge Stock ..... and also the dividends arising from One thousand pounds Birmingham Canal Navigation four per Cent Guaranteed Stock ..... shall be added to the "Retired Masters Trust Fund" now existing in connection with University College School London for the benefit of invalid or retired Masters of that School or their families .....

3 The sum of Two thousand pounds Caledonian Railway four per Cent Guaranteed Stock ..... shall be held in trust under the direction of the Council of the said College for the perpetual endowment of a bed in University College Hospital to be named the "Ellen Tapson" bed and if the income be in excess of the amount required for that purpose such excess together with a sum of Five hundred pounds shall go to the endowmwnt of a Cot in the Childrens Ward of the same Hospital and to be called the "Ellen Tapson" Cot

4 The remainder of the net proceeds of the sale of the said Leaseholds ..... together with all the rest of the said real and personal estate ..... shall be devoted to the foundation of Scholarships to be held in University College School London of the annual value of Twenty one pounds each and to be awarded for proficiency in French in History and in Geography ..... and to be called "The Robert Tapson Scholarships" of which Scholarships one shall be awarded in each of the said three subjects in each year and be tenable for a year but if the income of such net proceeds and residue should be more than sufficient to provide the three Scholarships above mentioned then such excess of income shall at the discretion of the Head Master be devoted to other Scholarships or prizes to be called the "Robert Tapson Scholarships or Prizes"

5 ..... And if any of the dispositions intended to be hereby made after the death of my said Wife

and her Mother shall fail of effect by reason of the laws respecting gifts by Will for charitable purposes or for any other reason whatsoever then and in that case I devise and bequeath the property the disposition whereof shall so fail ..... to the Right Honorable the Earl of Kimberley and Sir Julian Goldsmid Baronet absolutely as joint tenants ..... In witness whereof the said Testator Robert Tapson has hereunto set his hand this eighth day of September One thousand eight hundred and eighty three *Robert Tapson*

Robert died at Montem on 29 April 1890; his age, recorded as 62, would have been 64; however the ages given for him in the census returns were accurate. Probate was granted to *Ellen Catherine Tapson Widow (during Widowhood)* on 11 June 1890, Robert's estate being valued at £9,971 - 5 - 2. An obituary was published in the University College School Magazine of June 1890:

> *It is with great sorrow that we record the death, on April 29, of Mr. Robert Tapson, who had left us last Christmas after 29 years of hard work. Mr. Tapson was an Englishman by birth, but brought up mainly in France, so that he was naturally "doctus sermones utriusque linguae". In 1851 he began work as a schoolmaster. A good deal of his experience was gained in a well-known school presided over by Mr. Ogle, who has often spoken to the writer most warmly of his powers as a teacher and disciplinarian. In 1861 he joined the staff of U. C. S., where he worked for 29 years, without a single day's absence from illness till within a few days of the end of last Christmas term. When Mr. Case, the first Vice-Master of the School, gave up his boarding-house, Mr. Tapson succeeded him, and in the days when the home ground was at the Eton and Middlesex, his boarders contributed largely to the success of the Eleven. It need hardly be said that his kindness and his devotion to duty were no less conspicuous in the management of his boarding-house than in his school work. His whole heart was in his work here, but he could always find time for helping a friend in trouble, and he was a valuable member of the managing committee of the Board School in his neighbourhood. Last summer he was at the Paris Exhibition, paying a visit to his old friend and colleague, Mr. Bocquet. The fatigue of sight-seeing told upon him, and it was evident, when he returned after the holidays, that he had lost something of his usual freshness and energy. Under medical advice he gave up work at the end of the term, and his friends hoped that he would be spared to enjoy his well-earned leisure. At first he seemed to be regaining strength, but in the course of the Lent Term he was attacked by a serious illness, which eventually proved fatal. Like the Grammarian in Browning's poem, his last thoughts were with the work he had loved so well; in his wanderings, stray sentences of French, with which he had been at work with his class, were often on his lips. He was buried in the West Hampstead Cemetery, near his old friend, Mr. Horton, in the presence of nearly all the masters of the School, who felt that they had indeed lost a true friend and a devoted colleague.*

The present headmaster of U.C.S., Mr G. D. Slaughter, writes:

> *The Tapson name was, of course, familiar to me as we continue to award The Tapson Prize for History in the Sixth Form and The Tapson Prize for Modern Languages in the Sixth Form. I am afraid I do not know what happened to the Geography Prize!*
> *The money which Robert Tapson left to the School for the endowment of Robert Tapson Exhibitions has been absorbed into the General Charitable Trust and helps to fund Bursaries. The Retired Masters' Fund is still in existence and in these days of properly funded pensions is used each year to provide Christmas Hampers for retired masters and their widows.*

A supplementary list of U.S.C. alumni* (a copy may be seen at the Guildhall Library) gives the name of the first French Composition Prizeman (Tapson), who was elected in 1892. In this publication Robert's photo, along with photos of other masters at the school, appears facing page 17.

Ellen Catherine died at South Hampstead on 30 March 1902; her age was given as 68. Her will was proved on 6 May 1902, with effects valued at £4,117 - 2 - 0.•

*University College School Register Supplement 1831-1898 Lawrence & Bullen Ltd.

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

The Will of Ellen Catherine Tapson dated 11 October 1898

I Ellen Catherine Tapson now residing at No 32 Belsize Square South Hampstead in the county of London ..... declare this to be my last Will

1. I appoint my friends Henry Chettle Head Master of the Stationers School and George Bradshaw of No 37 Fellows Road South Hampstead aforesaid Executors of and bequeath to each ot them who shall prove this my Will the sum of fifty pounds free of legacy duty

2. I bequeath the following charitable legacies To the Hospital for diseases of the Nervous System No 32 Portland Terrace Regents Park the sum of five hundred pounds to the Free Cancer Hospital Fulham Road Brompton the sum of two hundred and fifty pounds To the Eastbourne Convalescent Home the sum of two hundred and fifty pounds To the National Lifeboat Institution the sum of four hundred pounds and to the Royal Blind Pension Society No 235 Southwark Bridge Road the sum of five hundred pounds .....

3. I devise and bequeath all the residue of my estate and effects whether real or personal ..... to the use of Annie Mackilligan of Braeside Berkhampstead in the County of Herts widow of Robert Mackilligan her heirs executors and assigns absolutely. In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of October one thousand eight hundred and ninety eight Ellen C. Tapson

If Robert's father, Nicholas, was one of the two possibilities already mentioned (page 353), then he would in either case have been quite remotely related to the Tapsons of St. Germans, so that the bequest made in the will of Robert's widow to Annie Mackilligin (page 261) might seem surprising; however, Robert and Alfred Joseph would quite possibly have met through their association with U.C.S., as master and as former pupil (page 259) respectively, and may even have attempted to trace their family connections. Nevertheless, it remains a possibility that Robert's father was some other Nicholas more closely related to the Tapsons of St. Germans, though no evidence of such a person has so far emerged.

10.13 JOHN TAPSON OF LAMERTON, HUSBANDMAN (B#40??)

A wedding at Milton Abbot, which is about ten miles south-west of Bridestowe village:

21 Jul 1798 ***John Tapson*** *of the Parish of Mary Tavy Bachelor &*
Agnes Drake *of this Parish Spinster*
by Banns in the presence of Rich^{d} Drake & William ..... [not a Tapson]

was followed by three baptisms at Coryton, a parish adjoining the parish of Milton Abbot but closer to Bridestowe:

4	*May*	*1800*	*Mary*	*dau of John Tapson & Agnes*
18	*Jul*	*1802*	*Susanna*	*dau of John Tapson & Agnes*
24	*Aug*	*1804*	*Ann*	*dau of John Tapson & Agnes*

There may have been further baptisms which have not yet come to light, and then there were three more baptisms at Brentor, the parish immediately to the south of Coryton parish:

9	*Jun*	*1811*	*Elizabeth*	*dau of John & Agnes Tapson*	
27	*Feb*	*1814*	*Agnes*	*dau of John & Agnes Tapson*	*North Brentor, Lamerton, Labourer*
28	*Jul*	*1816*	*Sally*	*dau of John & Agnes Tapson*	*Lamerton, Husbandman*

Brentor church is built on the summit of an isolated tor to the west of Dartmoor. The parish of Lamerton is just south of Milton Abbot parish and south-west of Brentor parish; North Brentor, not to be confused with Brentor, is a hamlet, about six miles from Bridestowe, in the parish of Lamerton.

Mary, Susanna and Elizabeth, the names of three of the daughters of John and Agnes, were the names of the three eldest sisters of John Tapson B#40, who would have been 31 years old at the time of the Milton Abbot marriage; Susanna, not a common name in the Tapson family, was also the name of his mother. Although this may seem fairly convincing evidence, it nevertheless falls short of providing positive proof of the identity of John Tapson of Lamerton.

Three burials are recorded in the Lamerton parish register:

30	*Jul*	*1833*	*Elizabeth Tapson*	*North Brentor*	*22*
20	*Dec*	*1835*	*James Tapson*	*North Brent*	*64*
4	*Oct*	*1838*	*Agnes Tapson*	*North Brent*	*65*

It is likely that the first and third burials were those of one of John's daughters, who would have been exactly 22 years old at the time, and of his wife. The second burial seems to have been that of John himself, although the burial entry clearly says *James*. John B#40 would have been 69 years old at the time of this burial, so the parish register entry does not provide the evidence we need to enable us to identify John Tapson of Lamerton with confidence. Her death certificate states that Agnes died of *inflamation* on 2 October 1838.*

Three of John's daughters were married at Lamerton:

30 Apr 1823 ***Thomas Gilbert*** *a Bachelor and sojourner of this Parish &*
Susanna Tapson *of this Parish Spinster*
by Banns in the presence of Hugh Hamley & Thomas Hamley

5 Feb 1830 ***George Williams*** *a sojourner of this Parish Bachelor &*
Mary Tapson *a sojourner of this Parish Spinster*
by Banns in the presence of James Northcott & Richard Harding

23 Apr 1839 ***William Gill*** *a sojourner of this Parish Bachelor and Miner &*
Agnes Tapson *of this Parish Spinster*
by Banns in the presence of William Jago(?) & John Metters

John Metters, a witness at Agnes's wedding, was soon to become one of the family, for the marriage was registered (East Stonehouse R.D.) in 1840, Q3, of John Metters and Sarah Tapson; John and Sarah are listed in the 1841 census for Lamerton (PRO HO107/232/1 Fo. 10):

North Brentor			
John Metters	*25-29*	*Copper Miner*	*Born in Devonshire*
Sarah Metters	*20-24*		*Born in Devonshire*
William Metters	*1*		*Born in Devonshire*
Anne Tapson	*25-29*		*Born in Devonshire*

The family had moved to Tavistock (PRO HO107/1883 Fo. 328) by the time of the 1851 census :

Gawton Quay					
John Metters	*Head*	*Mar*	*37*	*Laborer/Cartman*	*Devon, Lewtrenchard*
Sarah Metters	*Wife*	*Mar*	*34*		*„ Brentor*
William Metters	*Son*		*9*	*Scholar at Home*	*„ Lamerton*
Ellen Metters	*Dau*		*6*	*„ „ „*	*„ „*
John Metters	*Son*		*4*	*„ „ „*	*„ Mary Tavy*
Emma Metters	*Dau*		*2*		*„ „*
Ann Tapson	*Visitor*	*Un*	*25*	*House Servant*	*„ Bridestowe*

Sarah's age and place of birth proves that she was John's daughter Sally, who would have been exactly 34 at the time of the 1851 census.

Ann Tapson, servant to the Metters family, who moved with them from Lamerton to Tavistock, must have been Sarah's sister. Although her place of birth was given as Bridestowe, Ann was actually baptized at Coryton and would have been 46 years old at the time of the 1851 census, not 25 as recorded. However, when she died six years later her death certificate* stated that she was the daughter of *John Tapson (deceased)*, and died at *Gawton, Tavistock*, of *atrophy* on 23 October 1857, aged 54: and Sarah's sister Ann, John's third daughter, would have been in her 54th year at the time of this death. So it appears that Ann, who did not marry, made her home with the Metters family, perhaps moving in with them after the death of her mother in 1838. •

*Reported by Mrs. Pauline Johnson, Superintendent Registrar at Tavistock.

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

10.14 JOHN TAPSON OF LAMERTON, MANGANESE MINER & FARMER

Fursdon's transcript of Devon Marriage Licences (page 169) has the entry:

1 Jul 1834 John Tapson of Lamerton & Ann Rice of Milton Abbot, minor

The wedding was solemnized at East Stonehouse:

27 Sep 1834 ***John Tapson*** *of this Parish a Bachelor &*
Ann Rice *of this Parish a Spinster*
by Banns in the presence of Jn° Cornish & John Luno....(?)

The baptisms of the first two children of John and Ann took place at Lamerton:

26 Apr 1835 Marianne dau of John & Anne Tapson North Brent, Miner
27 Dec 1836 Elizabeth dau of John & Anne Tapson Wortha Mill, Miner

and they were followed by a burial, also at Lamerton:

7 Jun 1838 Elizabeth Tapson Wortha Mill 1

Elizabeth's death certificate* states that she died on 5 June 1838 of *Convulsion and fits*. The next child of John and Ann was baptized at Mary Tavy:

14 Aug 1839 Thomas son of John & Ann Tapson Wortha Mill, Miner
(Privately baptized)

The family appear in the 1841 census return for Lamerton (PRO HO107/232/1 Fo. 12):

North Brentor			
John Tapson	*30-34*	*Manganese Miner*	*Born in Devonshire*
Anne Tapson	*25-29*		*Born in Devonshire*
Mary Tapson	*6*		*Born in Devonshire*
Thomas Tapson	*1*		*Born in Devonshire*

Further births of children of John and Anne were registered (Tavistock R.D.): William in 1842, Q1, Celia in 1844, Q3, Elizabeth in 1847, Q4, and John Rice in 1851, Q2; the death of John Rice was also registered in 1851, Q2. All the surviving children were included in the 1851 census return for Lamerton (PRO HO107/1884 Fo.79):

North Brentor							
John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*42*	*Farmer of 28 Acres*		*Devon,*	*Bridestowe*
Ann Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*37*	*„*	*Wife*	*„*	*Lamerton*
Mary Ann Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*16*	*At home*		*„*	*„*
Thomas Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*11*	*Scholar*		*„*	*„*
William Tapson	*Son*		*9*	*„*		*„*	*„*
Celia Tapson	*Dau*		*6*	*„*		*„*	*„*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Dau*		*3*	*„*		*„*	*„*

By the time of the census John had changed his occupation, but he was still mining in 1846 when the following entry was made in the Register of Information preserved among the Tavistock Magistrate Court Records (WDRO 1942/7 Page 13):

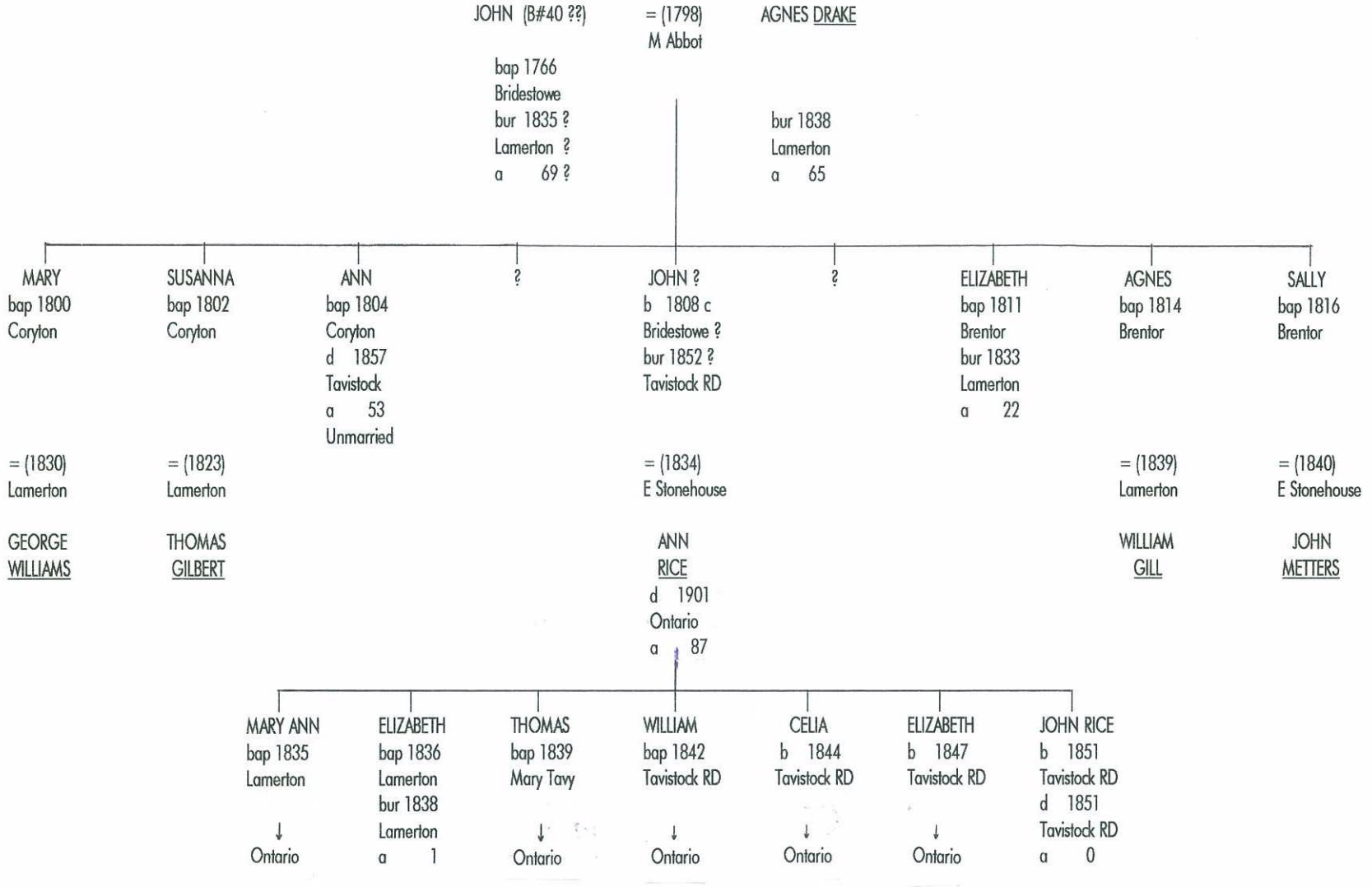
> *The Information and Complaint of Henry Rice of the Parish of Mary Tavy ..... Carpenter ..... this Fifteenth day of June 1846 who saith That on the Twelfth day of June instant at and in the parishes of Brentor and Lamerton ..... John Tapson of the parish of Lamerton ..... Miner did assault and beat him this Informant ..... whereby he hath forfeited for his said Offence the Sum of Five pounds.*

Henry Rice may have been a relative of John's wife, named as Ann Rice in the marriage allegation.•

The death of a John Tapson was registered (Tavistock R.D.) in 1852, Q4; but his death certificate would be needed for proof that he was John Tapson of Lamerton. As to John's identity, the only clue is in his address, *North Brentor*, which suggests that he may have been a son of John Tapson, Husbandman, born before the latter moved to North Brentor (page 356). If he gave his age correctly in 1851 John would have been born about 1808, but there is no baptismal entry for him at Bridestowe, which he gave as his place of birth. It is interesting that Ann's birthplace was also given as Bridestowe in the 1851 census (page 357), so it is quite possible that she was his sister.•

*Reported by Mrs. Pauline Johnson, Superintendent Registrar at Tavistock.

•See Appendix VI (Addenda).



It is not certain that the John born in c 1808 was a son of the John baptized in 1766.

DESCENDANTS OF JOHN TAPSON OF LAMERTON (B#40??)

10.15 JOHN TAPSON, LABOURER (B#57???)

A marriage at Lydford:

21 Apr 1807 ***John Tapson & Mary Moore*** *Sojourners by Banns*
in the presence of David Routleigh(?) & William Moore

when John and Mary both made their marks in the register, was followed by a baptism at Lydford:

25 Oct 1807 Elizabeth dau of John & Mary Tapson

It was probably the same John and Mary who had a son baptized at Tavistock:

18 Sep 1812 William son of John Tapson, Labourer, & Mary his wife

Nothing more is known about this John and Mary. One possibility is that John was B#57, the base child of Elizabeth Tapson (page 159), who would have been 27 years old at the time of the Lydford wedding; and it may be significant that the names of John's children were the names of the mother and grandfather of B#57. However, until such time as more information about him becomes available, he must be regarded as a *stray*.

10.16 WILLIAM TAPSON, ROYAL NAVY, BOATSWAIN

A marriage is recorded in the Stoke Damerel parish register:

7 Apr 1840	***William Tapson***	*Full*	*Bachelor*	*Mariner*	*7 Drake St*	
				(Father: John Tapson, Labourer)		
	Mary Ann Bate	*Full*	*Spinster*		*7 Drake St*	
				(Father: John Bate, Blacksmith)		

in the presence of Ja^{s} Prons(?) & Geo Nettle

The birth was registered (Plymouth R.D.) in 1844, Q4, of Caroline Elizabeth Tapson, but the name of the child was incorrectly entered in her baptismal entry in the register of St. Andrew, Plymouth:

20 Nov 1844 Ellen Elizabeth dau of William & Mary Ann Tapson Richmond Street
Mariner (born 4 October 1844)

William was aboard H.M.S. Wasp at the time of the 1851 census, but his wife and daughter were listed in the return for the parish of St. Andrew, Plymouth (PRO HO107/1879 Fo. 455):

54 Richmond St

Mary Ann Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*32*	*Seaman's wife*	*Devon, Plymouth*
Caroline Tapson	*Dau*		*6*	*Scholar*	*„ „*

The birth of another daughter, Emily Jane, was registered in 1853, Q2 (N. Aylesford R.D.). Then a son, William John, was born, according to his birth certificate, at 38 Cambridge Street, Plymouth, on 8 March 1855; the father was named as *William Tapson, Boatswain H.M.S. Wolverine*, and the mother as *Mary Ann Tapson, formerly Bate*. The Elizabeth Tapson whose birth and death were both registered (Plymouth R.D.) in 1857, Q3, may have been another daughter of William and Mary Ann, but her birth certificate would be needed for confirmation.

It would appear that William was at sea at the time of the 1861 census,• but Mary and the children were living in Plymouth and are included in the return for Plymouth, St. Andrew (PRO RG9/1441 Fo. 38):

66 Cambridge Street

Mary A.Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*43*		*Devon, Plymouth*
Caroline E. Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*17*	*Milliner*	*„ „*
Emily J. Tapson	*Dau*		*8*	*Scholar*	*Kent, Chatham*
William J. Tapson	*Son*		*6*	*„*	*Devon, Plymouth*

The marriage of Caroline Elizabeth was registered (Plymouth R.D.) in 1867, Q4, and that of Emily Jane in 1874, Q1 (Newton Abbot R.D.).

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

The early part of William's service career is detailed in a book of Warrant Officers' and Seamen's Services (PRO ADM29/79 Page 26). It appears that he was promoted to the rank of warrant officer when he became an acting boatswain:

Mr William Tapson

Character	Ship	Age	Entry	Rank/Rating	Discharge	Cause	Time Years	Time Days
	Stag	21	4 Nov 32	Ord	6 Nov 32		3	42
Not stated	„		7 Nov 32	A.B.	15 Dec 35	Off		
	Talanera		12 Apr 36	„	3 Jan 40	Off	~~3~~	~~267~~
Good	Thunderer		9 Feb 40	„	21 Mar 40	Hospital		42
	„		4 Apr 40	„	23 Jul 41			
	„		24 Jul 41	Cap. F. Top	21 Sep 42			
	„		22 Sep 42	A.B.	27 Jan 43		7	295
Not stated	„		28 Jan 43	Cap. F. Top	12 Oct 43			
V Good	Albion		13 Oct 43	„	22 Jan 48	Off	14	281
Not stated	Agincourt		8 Feb 48	Actg. Boats^{w} 3^{d} Cl	30 Aug 50		3	267
							11	14
Good	St George		31 Aug 50	„	5 Oct 50			
Not stated	Wasp		6 Oct 50	Boats^{w} 3^{d} Cl	19 Oct 52			
Good	Neptune		20 Oct 52	„	21 Dec 52		6	329
Not stated	Boscawen		22 Dec 52	„	21 Nov 53			
Good	Poitiers		22 Nov 53	„	1 May 54			
Good	Wellesley		2 May 54	„	13 May 54			
Not stated	Wolverine		14 May 54	„	31 Dec 54			

S. & P.O. 11 - 14 W.O. 6 - 329

The reason why the period William spent on the Talanera was crossed out, so that it did not count towards his total time as a seaman and petty officer, is explained in his *Certificate of Service* (PRO ADM29/121 Page 14). Certificates of Service were issued to support claims for pensions, and that for William, which describes him as a *Chief Boatswain*, refers to his service records 79/26 (quoted above), 2/149, 1/206 and 3/149. (These last three records, not yet found in the PRO, relate to the later part of his career.) His total service is tabulated and an explanatory comment added:

Seaman & Petty Officer Yrs	Seaman & Petty Officer Dys	Warrant Officer Yrs	Warrant Officer Dys	Total Yrs	Total Dys
11	14	6	329		
		10	3	33	104
		5	123		

The 3 years 267 days served in the "Talanera" between 1836 and 1840 has not been included in his service owing to the character being shewn (by copy of Certificate attached) as Indifferent for that period. On the Ships Books however his character is not recorded, it is not known whether he held such character during the whole of his service in that ship

In preparation for his retirement William took out a mortgage for the purchase of a newly-built house in Plymouth (WDRO 1309/123):

Mortgage in Fee (Abstract)

Indenture dated 17 August 1867 between

1. William Tapson of Plymouth, a Warrant Officer in Her Majesty's Royal Navy
2. John Greenway & Henry Charles Fox of Plymouth, Solicitors, the Mortgagees

Mortgagees grant a loan of £90 to be repaid on 25 December next with interest at 5% p.a. for the purchase of a parcel of land (1220 feet) with messuage in Well Street (No 72).

In July 1870, for the first time, boatswains were included in the Navy List. William is listed as Chief Boatswain on H.M.S. Britannia, the training ship for naval cadets at Dartmouth, his date of entry to that ship being given as 11 August 1869. He is not listed in the Navy Lists for 1871, so it seems that he retired from the Royal Navy towards the end of 1870.[•] William is listed at his new home, under *Private Residents*, in Harrod's 1878 directory for Plymouth:

Tapson, Mr William, 72 Well St

and this was the address given for his wife in her burial entry in the Ford Park Cemetery register:

11 *Sep 1877 Mary Ann Tapson 72 Well St Ply 59*

William was buried at Ford Park three years afterwards:

23 Jul 1880 William Tapson 23 Old Town St Plym (St Andrew) 68

At the time of his marriage William named his father as *John Tapson, Labourer*; and the *William, son of John Tapson, Labourer* born on 18 September 1812 (page 360) would have been almost 68 years old at the time of this Ford Park burial. So it seems likely that the William Tapson buried on 23 July 1880 was the William Tapson born on 18 September 1812 and therefore, quite possibly, the son of John B#57, the base child of Elizabeth Tapson. If William Tapson, Boatswain, could be found on a census return, his place of birth would help to resolve this question — William the son of John having been baptized at Tavistock.

10.17 WILLIAM JOHN TAPSON, ENGINE FITTER

The marriage of William John Tapson, the son of William Tapson, Boatswain, was registered in 1876, Q1 (Newton Abbot R.D.), and the birth of a son, William John, was registered (Stoke Damerel R.D.) in 1876, Q4. Soon afterwards William John joined the Royal Navy; details of his brief service career are to be found in a Register of Seamen's Services (PRO ADM188/116):

Name	*Date of Birth*	*Place of Birth*	*Date and Period of C.S. Engagement*	
William John Tapson	*8 March 1855*	*Plymouth*	*6 June 1877*	*10 years*

Height	*Hair*	*Eyes*	*Complexion*	*Trade*
5 6¼	*D Brown*	*Blue*	*Fresh*	*Fitter*

Ship Served in	*Rating*		*Character*
Indus	*Act. ERA*	*6 Jun 77 — 16 Jul 77*	*S only*
Shannon	*„*	*17 Jul 77 — 11 Sep 77*	*V Good*
„	*„*	*12 Sep 77 — 12 Nov 77*	*F on probation*

Discharged to R. Adelaide for Ct Martial
D. to Bodmin Gaol 27 . 11 . 77 from Roy. Adelaide

John could not have been incarcerated in Bodmin gaol for long, because in 1878, Q4, the birth of his second son, Percy, was registered (Medway R.D.), and a daughter, Beatrice, was born towards the end of 1880, though her birth was not registered. William John was living at Chatham, on the Medway estuary in Kent, when Percy and Beatrice were born, but had returned with his wife and children to Plymouth by the time of the 1881 census, when the family were included in the return for the parish of St. Andrew (PRO RG11/2196 Fo. 111):

32 Harwell St.

William J. Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*26*	*Engine Fitter at Wks*	*Devon,*	*Plymouth*
Bessie Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*25*		*„*	*Newton Abbot*
William J. Tapson	*Son*		*4*	*Scholar*	*„*	*Devonport*
Percy Tapson	*Son*		*2*		*Kent,*	*Chatham*
Beatrice Tapson	*Dau*		*4 mo.*		*„*	*„*

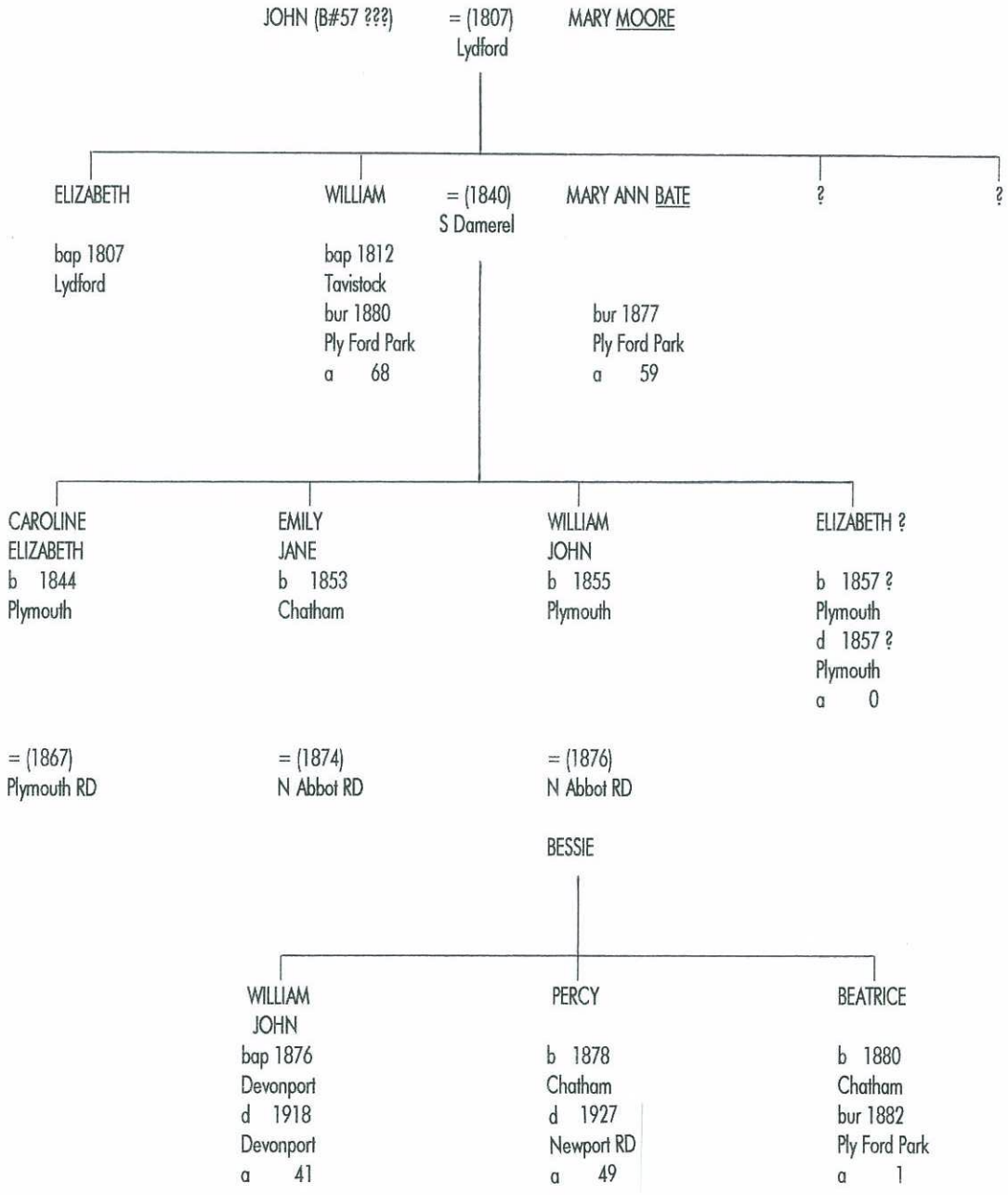
Less than a year after the census Beatrice was buried in Ford Park Cemetery:

20 Jan 1882 Beatrice Tapson 30 Flora Street, Plymouth (St Andrew) 14 months

[•] See Appendix VI (Addenda)

No further details have so far come to light about William John Tapson Senior or his wife, Bessie;• however, the death of William John Tapson Junior was registered (Devonport R.D.) in 1918, Q2, his age being given correctly as 41.• The Letters of Administration of his estate, dated 29 January 1919, state that he died at his home, 60 St. Aubyn Street, Devonport, on 15 June 1918, and that he was *a bachelor without parent*. Because *Percy Tapson his natural and lawful brother and only next of kin is now out of England*, adminstration was granted to Albert Gard of 6 St. Aubyn Street, *the lawful Attorney of the said Percy Tapson*. The estate of William John Tapson Junior was valued at £743 - 9 - 0 gross, £705 - 16 - 6 net.

<u>Descendants of John Tapson (B#57???)</u>



• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

10.18 ROBERT TAPSON OF WALTHAMSTOW, COACHMASTER

Both groom and bride made their marks in the marriage register of St. Mary, Leyton, the parish which, although in Essex, lies just across the Lee valley from Hackney (VHMA):

7 Feb 1760 ***Robert Tapson*** *of the Parish of Leyton in the County of Essex Batchelor &* ***Elizabeth Butler*** *of Leyton Spinster*
by Licence in the presence of ?T. Butler & Ann Dayson

No clue has been forthcoming as to Robert's identity. He may have been a son, whose baptismal entry has not yet been found, of a family already living in the London area; or he may have been born in Devonshire, subsequently moving to Leyton. The fact that he was still a bachelor at the time of his marriage suggests that he was probably born between 1730 and 1740. One possibility is that he may have been B#23, baptized on 5 November 1734 (page 130), whose father, Nicholas, died when he was only three years old; nothing more is heard of him in Bridestowe, but there is no obvious explanation of why he might have ended up at Leyton.

The wedding was followed by four baptisms at the same church:

12 Oct 1760 Elizabeth dau of Robert & Elizabeth Tapson
9 May 1762 James son of Robert & Elizabeth Tapson
8 Apr 1764 Ann dau of Robert & Elizabeth Tapson
15 Mar 1769 Robert son of Robert & Elizabeth Tapson

Robert was buried at St. Mary's three months later:

19 Jun 1769 Robert son of Robert & Elizabeth Tapson

By 1775 the family had moved to the neighbouring Essex parish of Walthamstow, which is about seven miles north-east of the City of London. Here two more of their children were baptized in the parish church, also dedicated to St. Mary (VHMA):

1 Jan 1775 Margarett dau of Robert & Elizabeth Tapson
15 Dec 1776 Molly dau of Robert & Elizabeth Tapson

Shortly afterwards there was a burial at Leyton:

6 Feb 1777 Margaret dau of Thomas & Elizabeth Tapson

No further reference to a Thomas Tapson has been found in Leyton parish, nor has any further reference to Margaret been found; so it would seem that the name *Thomas* was written in error for *Robert*, and that Margaret was the second child of Robert and Elizabeth to die in infancy.

At a Court of the Manors of Walthamstow Toney and High Hall held on 28 May 1776 Robert was granted the copyhold (page 104) of a piece of land within the manors on which stood a *Coachhouse*. The grant, carried out by livery of seizin (page 38), was entered into the Court records (VHMA W35.21/3 Fo. 93):

> *At this Court the Homage presented their Consent and the Lord of the said Manors Granted Seizin by the Rod according to the Custom of these Manors to Mr Robert Tapson and his heirs of All that piece of Customary or Wast Land situate on the Forest within the said Manors containing twenty feet in breadth and fifty feet in length on part whereof a Coachhouse is built now in the possession of the said Robert Tapson Rendring therefore yearly to the Lord of the said Manors for the time being the yearly Rent of Two pence — payable at the Feast of the Annunciation of the blessed Virgin yearly*

It is interesting to observe that, although towards the end of the Eighteenth Century manor court records were written in English into books rather than in much-abbreviated Latin onto parchment rolls as they had been in earlier centuries (page 112), the manorial system had remained largely unchanged. Some of the manorial functions had, however, been taken over by county assizes and parish councils. One of the functions of the parish councils was the collection and the distribution of Poor Relief. The return showing the Poor Relief Rate for Walthamstow Parish covering the period from Lady Day to Michaelmas Day, 1778, indicates a rate of 12p in the pound on property rents (i.e. 5%); the entry for Robert Tapson, whose address is given as *On the Forrest*, is:

Mr Tapsoms House & Stabels Rent £20 Rate £1

The Manor Court record for 2 June 1789 shows Robert in failing health, for he surrendered his holding to the lord of the manor *to the Use of his will* (VHMA W35.21/3 Fo. 207):

> *At this Court Robert Tapson one of the Customary Tenants of the said Manors surrendered into the Hands of the Lord of the said Manors by the Rod by the Hands and acceptance of the Steward according to the Custom of the said Manors All and singular the Lands and Hereditaments holden by him of these Manors To the Use and behoof of such person and persons and for such Estate and Estates as he the said Robert Tapson by his last Will and Testament in writing hath devised declared limited and appointed or shall devise declare limit and appoint the same*

The Will of Robert Tapson dated 20 June 1789

In the Name of God Amen I Robert Tapson of Walthamstow in the County of Essex Coachmaster being of sound mind and memory do make publish and declare this my last Will and Testament in manner and form following that is to say I give and devise and bequeath all and singular my copyhold Messuages Tenement Land Hereditaments and premises whatsoever and wheresoever situated and being with their and every of their appurtenances thereunto belonging which I have surrendered to the use of this my last Will and Testament unto my dear loving Wife Elizabeth Tapson and her assigns for and during the term of her natural life without impeachment of or for any manner of waste arising to the Custom of the Manor under which I hold the same and from and after the decease of my said dear loving Wife Elizabeth Tapson I give and devise the same to my daughter Molly Tapson for her natural life and after her decease I give and devise the same to be equally divided between my other children that shall be living at the time of her death share and share alike And as to and for concerning all the rest and residue of my Estate and Effects whatsoever real or personal of what kind soever I give and devise and bequeath unto my dear loving Wife Elizabeth Tapson for her whole and sole use and benefit for ever And I do hereby Constitute ..... my dear loving Wife Elizabeth Tapson Sole Executrix of this my last Will and Testament ..... In Witness whereof I the said Testator Robert Tapson have to this my last Will and Testament set my Hand and Seal this twentieth day of June in the Year of Our Lord One thousand seven hundred and eighty nine *Robert Tapson*

Robert was buried at the church of St. Mary, Leyton:

3 Mar 1790 Robert Tapson

His will (PRO PROB11/1205 Fo. 196) was proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury at London on 24 May 1791 *by the oath of Elizabeth Tapson Widow the Relict of the deceased*. Written into the records for the Court held on 25 May 1790 is a *First Proclamat^n^ on the Death of Robert Tapson* (VHMA W35.21/3 Fo 223):

> *At this Court the Homage present that Robert Tapson late one of the Customary Tenants of the said Manor died since the last Court but what Customary Lands or Tenements the said Robert Tapson held of the Lord of the said Manors at his Death or who is his Heir at Law they knew not — Therefore the first proclamation was made for the Heirs of the said Robert Tapson to come to this Court to be admitted to the Customary Lands and Tenements which the said Robert Tapson held of the Lord of the said Manors by Copy of Court Roll, but none appeared*

At the Court held on 14 June 1791 both Robert's widow and his youngest daughter were present (VHMA W35.21/3 Fo.231):

> *Whereas at a Court held for these Manors the second June one thousand seven hundred and eighty nine Robert Tapson one of the Customary Tenants of the said Manors did Surrender into the Hands of the Lord of the said Manors ..... All and singular his Lands and Hereditaments held by him of the said Manors ..... And whereas it is presented by the Homage that the said Robert Tapson is since dead Seized of All that piece of Customary or Waste Land Situate on the Forrest ..... the Homage further present that the said Robert Tapson duly made and published his last Will and Testament ..... now produced in Court whereby he gave the said premises to his Wife Elizabeth Tapson for her life and from and after her death he gave and bequeathed the same to his daughter Molly Tapson for her life*

The next entry for that session of the Court was headed *Elizabeth Tapson Admission*:

Now at this Court came the said Elizabeth Tapson the Widow of the said Robert Tapson in her own proper person and humbly prayed of the Lord of the said Manors to be Admitted Tenant of the said premises so devised to her as aforesaid. To whom the said Lord by his said Steward granted Seizin thereof by the Rod To have and to hold the said Premises with the Appurtenances to the said Elizabeth Tapson for and during the Term of her natural life according to the said Will at the Will of the Lord according to the Custom of the said Manors by the Rents Customs and Services therefore due and of Right accustomed and she giveth unto the Lord for a Fine 8^{l} (?) and is thereupon Admitted Tenant but her Fealty is respited

The next entry, headed *Molly Tapson's Admission*, was similar, except that she was to be admitted tenant after her mother's death; she too had to pay a fine, which again appears to be 8^{l} (8 pounds).

On 6 June 1797 the Court granted Elizabeth more land (VHMA W35.21/3 Fo. 273):

At this same Court the Homage presented their Consent and the Lord of these Manors by his said Steward granted Seizin by the Rod according to the Custom of these Manors to Elizabeth Tapson Widow and her heirs Of all that piece of Waste Land situate within these Manors on the Forest Containing by Estimation fourteen roods adjoining to the Premises which the said Elizabeth Tapson holdeth of the Lord of these Manors Reserving to the Lord and his heirs the Yearly rent of Two pence payable at the Feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary yearly

Elizabeth then surrendered her holdings to the Lord of the Manor *to the Use of her will* (Fo. 274):

Afterwards at the same Court the said Elizabeth Tapson surrendered into the Hands of the Lord of these Manors by the Hands & acceptance of his s^{d} Steward All and singular the Hereditaments & premises which she holds of the Lord of these Manors by Copy of Court Roll To the Use and behoof of such person and persons and for such Estates and Interests as she the said Elizabeth Tapson by her last Will and Testament in writing hath devised limited declared and appointed or shall devise limit declare or appoint the same

The Will of Elizabeth Tapson dated 21 March 1816

This is the last Will and Testament of me Elizabeth Tapson of Walthamstow in the County of Essex widow ..... I give and devise unto my daughters Elizabeth Shadrick and Ann Gadsby all that piece of waste Land containing by Estimation fourteen rods situate within the Manor of Walthamstow Toney and High Hall in the said County to which I was admitted at a Court held for the said Manor on the sixth day of June one thousand seven hundred and ninety seven with its rights members and appurtenances and all my Estate right title and Interest therein ..... and I give devise and bequeath all the rest and residue of my Lands Tenements Hereditaments and real Estate ..... and also all my household Goods and Furniture and all other my personal Estate and Effects ..... unto my said two daughters Elizabeth Shadrick and Ann Gadsby and my daughter Molly Rowed ..... I do hereby nominate and appoint my said two daughters Ann Gadsby and Molly Rowed Executrixes of this my will and I do desire them to distribute in such manner as they shall think proper among the poor widows in the old alms houses at Walthamstow and the poor in the workhouse there on the day of my burial the sum of two Guineas either in money or otherwise as they my said Executrixes shall think proper ..... In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this twenty first day of March in the Year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and Sixteen The mark of Elizabeth Tapson
I likewise subject my two daughters Elizabeth Shadrick and Ann Gadsby to the payment of four shillings per year out of the aforesaid piece of Ground share and share alike for the keeping up of my Grave and three others adjoining belonging to the same Family

Elizabeth's burial is recorded in the register of St. Mary's, Leyton:

11 Aug 1819 Elizabeth Tapson of Walthamstow 81 years

Her will (PRO PROB11/1619 Fo. 324) was proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury at London on 19 August 1819 *by the oaths of Ann Gadsby (wife of William Gadsby) and Molly Rowed (wife of Richard Rowed).*

James, the surviving son of Robert and Elizabeth, was a witness on 23 February 1784 at the marriage of *James Gorst, Widower* to *Jane Haysler, Spinster* at the Leyton parish church of St. Mary (VHMA). Four years later he himself was married at the church of St. Botolph Without, Bishopsgate (GL):

26 Jan 1788 ***James Tapson*** *of this Parish Bachelor &* ***Ann Higgs*** *of the same Spinster by Banns in the presence of John White & W^m^ Binfield*

James and Ann then moved to Beaconsfield, which is in Buckinghamshire nearly twenty five miles west-northwest of the City of London, but nothing more is known about them until James's burial at St. Mary's, Leyton:

23 Feb 1816 James Tapson of Beckonsfield 54 years

Ann was certainly back in Leyton by 1830 when she paid £1 - 1 - 0 in Poor Relief at 3/- in the pound on property with a rental of £7 (VHMA). In the 1831 census for Leyton *Tapston Ann* was named as a householder. The Poor Relief return dated 4 November 1834 describes her house as *Empty.*

The Will of Ann Tapson dated 25 September 1833

I Ann Tapson Widow late of Beaconsfield in the County of Buckinghamshire now of Leytonstone in the County of Essex being of sound and disposing mind and memory do make and declare this to be my last Will and Testament ..... I give and bequeath to my Nephew James Higgs two hundred pounds Stock in the three Per Cent Consols I give and bequeath to my Nephew Francis Weston one hundred and fifty pounds Stock in the three Per Cent Consols I give and bequeath to my Niece Martha Weston fifty pounds Stock in the three per Cent Consols I give and bequeath to my Nephew John Weston one hundred pounds Stock in the three per Cent Consols I give and bequeath to my Nephew James Tapson Sillitor one hundred pounds Stock in the three Per Cent Consols I give and bequeath to my Nephew Thomas Higgs twenty pounds of Lawful money of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland Current in England I give and bequeath to my Nephew John Higgs fifty pounds of Lawful money of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland Current in England I give and bequeath to my Nephew Samuel Higgs one hundred pounds Stock in the three per Cent Consols I give and bequeath to Robert Eaton Higgs (the Son of the aforesaid James Higgs) three hundred pounds Stock in the three Per Cent Consols I give and bequeath to my Nephew Charles Higgs two hundred and twenty two pounds of lawful money Current in England being the amount lent him and now due to me I also give and bequeath to the said Charles Higgs ten pounds in addition to the two hundred and twenty two pounds as aforesaid making two hundred and thirty two pounds of Lawful money of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland Current in England I give and bequeath to my Nephew George Sillitor six hundred pounds Stock in the three Per Cent Consols And I hereby nominate constitute and appoint my said Nephew George Sillitor my Executor Administrator and Residuary Legatee of this my Will ..... In Witness whereof I the said Testatrix have to this my last Will and Testament set my hand and seal this twenty fifth day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty three *Ann Tapson*

James Higgs, Thomas Higgs, John Higgs, Samuel Higgs and Charles Higgs were probably children of Ann's brother, or brothers. It would be logical to assume that her nephews James Tapson Sillitor and George Sillitor were children of one of her husband's sisters; but there is a problem, for the baptismal entry for James Tapson Sillitor in the register of St. Marylebone, Marylebone (GLRO), suggests that his mother had been born Mary Tapson:

? Jun 1804 James Tapson son of Cha^s^ & Mary Sillitor (born 28 May)

So far no baptismal entry has been found for a daughter of Robert and Elizabeth named Mary, though it is possible that more children were baptized in another parish between 1769 and 1776 (page 362); however, there is no mention of such a Mary in Elizabeth's will. Ann's will (PRO PROB11/1838 Fo. 2) was proved at London on 3 October 1834 *by the oath of George Sillitor the Nephew the sole Executor.* Ann seems to have been comfortably well off, for altogether she bequeathed £1,600 in Consols and £302 in money over and above her residuary estate. The will suggests that there were no (surviving) children of her marriage, since all her bequests were to nephews and nieces.

10.19 CHRISTOPHER SAMUEL TAPSON, COMMERCIAL TRAVELLER

The identity of the father of Samuel Tapson who was born in the Cornish parish of Maker, across the Tamar estuary from Plymouth, on 8 March 1865 was discussed on page 203, where it was suggested that, although the father was named as *Christopher Tapson, a Ships Steward*, he may have been Christopher's son William, a ship's steward at the time, and that Samuel was his illegitimate child. However, because absolute proof is lacking, Samuel is here placed among the *Strays*.

William joined H.M.S. Bombay on 2 April 1864 (page 202); the log book of that ship (PRO ADM53/8164) records that she was at Chatham Dockyard (in Kent, east of London on the river Medway) from 1 to 6 April 1864. The Bombay reached Plymouth Sound on 6 May 1864 and remained there until 11 May 1864, just ten months before the date given for Samuel's birth, when she set sail for Rio de Janeiro, arriving seven weeks later, on 28 June 1864. However, on the day of her departure William was transferred to H.M.S. Egmont (page 202). According to the ship's log of the Egmont (PRO ADM53/8920), she was at that time already moored in Rio de Janeiro Harbour, and had been there since 27 March 1864, so William must have sailed to Rio on the Bombay or on some other ship. This is confirmed by an entry in the Muster Book of the Egmont (PRO ADM38/8022), which states that William's date of entry to that ship was 11 May 1864, but that his date of appearance was 27 December 1864, and that he had been aboard H.M.S. Industry since 3 December *for passage to Bombay*. [The meaning of this phrase is not clear: at 3.35 p.m. on 14 December 1864, six months after her arrival at Rio, a fire broke out in the after-hold of the Bombay; the crew had to abandon ship before it was engulfed with fire and sank.]

If William had sailed from Plymouth on 11 May 1864 aboard the Bombay, it would be difficult (assuming he was Samuel's father) to account for the ten month gap before Samuel's birth, so William may have had shore leave in Plymouth and then left aboard another ship. Since the sailing time to Rio was about seven weeks, he could have joined the Industry on 3 December even if he had remained in Plymouth until early October. William stayed with the Egmont until 15 August 1868 (page 202), so he was not in Plymouth at the time of the registration of Samuel's birth on 15 April 1865; however, it is quite possible that the birth was registered by a relative of Jane passing himself off as *Christopher Tapson* and making his mark so that he would not have to forge William's signature.

It is not known whether Samuel was brought up by his mother's sister, but he was living with her at the time of the 1881 census return for East Stonehouse (PRO RG11/2203 Fo. 120):•

62 Emma Pl					
Elizabeth Crump	*Head*	*Wid*	*45*	*Laundress*	*Devon, Plymouth*
Christopher Tapson	*Nephew*		*16*	*Errand Boy*	*Cornwall, Millbrook*

According to his birth certificate (page 203) Samuel had been born just 16 years before at Millbrook, in the parish of Maker, so he must have been the Christopher of this census return. It will become clear later that he used the name *Christopher Samuel Tapson*. Christopher Samuel was still living with his aunt at the time of the 1891 census return for East Stonehouse (PRO RG12/1738 Fo. 101):

11 Emma Place					
Elizabeth Crump	*Head*	*Wid*	*56*	*Caretaker*	*Devon, Plymouth*
Bessie Crump	*Dau*	*Un*	*27*	*Seamstress*	*„ East Stonehouse*
Myra E. Berkley	*GrandDau*		*4*		*„ „ „*
Christopher Tapson	*Nephew*	*Un*	*26*	*Clothier Wholesale (Assistant)*	*Cornwall, Millbrook*

The name *Christopher Samuel* first appears in the East Stonehouse marriage entry:

8 Sep 1891	***Christopher Samuel Tapson***	*26*	*Bachelor*	*Warehouseman*
	11 Emma Place	*(Father: Christopher Tapson, Gamekeeper)*		
	Emily Ann Pagsley	*22*	*Spinster*	
	19 Admiralty St.	*(Father: Henry Pagsley, Pensioner)*		

by Banns in the presence of H. Pagsley, G. Pagsley & Kate Underwood

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I MISCELLANEOUS PARISH REGISTER ENTRIES PRE-1837

Below are listed some parish register and bishop's transcript entries to which reference has not been made in the preceding text or in Appendix VI (Addenda); it may be possible to identify more of the names if further evidence is discovered in the future.

1. DEVONSHIRE

Bratton Clovelly

Marriage: *10 Dec 1619 William Pengelly & Agnes Tapson*

[An Exeter marriage licence* dated 15 (*sic*) December 1619 between *William Pengelly of Bratton Clovelly & Agnes Tapson of Buckland Monachorum* suggests that Agnes was either a daughter of Richard or a daughter of John (page 4) of Buckland Monachorum. If she was a daughter of Richard, and therefore probably the youngest sister of William Tapson of East Stonehouse (page 35), this marriage could provide an explanation of how William's brother Thomas came to meet and to marry Agnes Incledon of Bratton Clovelly (page 75), Bratton Clovelly being more than twenty miles from East Stonehouse.

All Hallows, Goldsmith Street, Exeter

Marriage: *13 Jul 1631 Roger Stacey & Agnes Tapson*

[The register of All Hallows exists only in transcript (CL).]

*J.L. VIVIAN: Index of Exeter Diocese Marriage Licences 1523-1632 Pub 1899

St. Andrew, Plymouth

Marriages:
8 Sep 1645 *Anstis Jenkin & Haggai Tapson*
4 Jan 1647 *James Cotton & Elizabeth Tapson*
28 Jun 1683 *John Harvey of Tavistock & Elizabeth Tapson of Buckland Monachorum*
26 Dec 1687 *John Somerton & Mary Tapson*
2 Jul 1731 *John Prisley & Mary Tapson by Banns*
3 May 1738 *Henry Gould & Elizabeth Tapson by Banns*
25 Dec 1741 *Thomas Oliver & Elizabeth Tapson by Banns*

Baptism:
22 Oct 1780 *John son of John & Ann Tapson*

Lydford

Marriage:
18 Apr 1775 *John Kent Sojourner of this Parish & Mary Tapson of this Parish by Banns in the presence of John Williams & William Tapson*

[Mary may have been B#32, then 25 years old, the eldest daughter of William B#15 (page 159) who may have been one of the witnesses.]

Whitchurch

Marriage:
1 Nov 1784 *Nathaniel Earle of this Parish & Catherine Tapson of this Parish by Banns in the presence of Thos Hughs & Jno Doidge*

Charles the Martyr, Plymouth

Marriages:
26 Apr 1780 *John Fry of this Parish Baker & Ann Tapson of this Parish Spinster by Banns in the presence of Benjamin Kemp & Eliz March*
24 Jan 1825 *Robert Pierce, Marble Mason of St Thomas Parish Exeter now residing in the Parish of Charles in Plymouth Bachelor & Dinah Tapson of this Parish Spinster by Licence in the presence of Thos Osborne & Jane Ann Brooks*

[*Dinah* may have been Dionysia B#55, then about 33 years old, whose mother and brother John had also moved to Plymouth (page 146).]

Stoke Damerel

Marriages:
20 Mar 1798 *John Ash & Thomasin Rowe Tapson by Banns*
6 Oct 1824 *John Shadwick of this Parish Labourer & Elizabeth Tapson of this Parish Spinster by Banns in the presence of Samuel Chanson(?) & Jane Graham*
31 Dec 1831 *William Sweetland of this Parish Mariner & Sarah Tapson of this Parish Spinster by Banns in the presence of George Nettle & Grace Algar*

[The Sweetlands were listed in the 1851 census return for the parish of Charles the Martyr, Plymouth (PRO HO107/1878 Fo. 262):

20 Moon Street

William Sweetland	*Head*	*Mar*	*47*	*Seaman*	*Cornwall, Truro(?)*	
Sarah Sweetland	*Wife*	*Mar*	*41*		*Devon, Plymouth*	
William Sweetland	*Son*	*Un*	*16*		„	„
Mary Sweetland	*Dau*		*10*		„	„
Samuel Sweetland	*Son*		*8*		„	„
James Sweetland	*Son*		*4*		„	„
Edward Cummings	*Nurse Child*		*2*		„	„]

2. CORNWALL

St. Ive

Marriage:
10 Aug 1624 *John Tapson & Rebecca Reede*

[In 1642 a John Tapson signed the Protestion Oath at St. Ive and a John Tapson signed it at Meavy, just to the east of Buckland Monachorum (page 19).

In 1674 a John Tapson and an Ann Tapson paid Hearth Tax at Meavy (page 20). The burials of *Rebecka Tapson* (1674), of *John Tapson* (1677) and of *John Tapson* (1682) are recorded at Meavy, and on 2 July 1678 *Anne Tapson of Meavy widow* was buried at Buckland Monachorum (page 7).]

St. Martin by Looe

Marriages: *2 Jul 1661 Nicholas Tapson & Grace Parish*
9 Apr 1670 William Miracke & Grace Tapson
Baptism: *1 May 1665 Margaret dau of Nicholas Tapson & Grace*

Duloe

Marriage: *3 Sep 1672 John Callaway & Elizabeth Tapson*

Launceston

Marriage: *25 Feb 1677 Edward Aire & Emlin Tapson*
[Emlin may have been a daughter, then 46 years old, of William Tapson of East Stonehouse (page 35), or a later descendant of his.]

Tremaine:

Marriage: *26 Dec 1726 John Tapson & Mary Headon by Banns*
Baptism: *9 Feb 1726 William son of John Tapson & Mary*

Altarnum

Marriage: *29 Sep 1827 John Hore of this Parish Widower & Mary Tapson of this Parish by Banns in the presence of Christopher Pellow & John Congdon*

3. LONDON/MIDDLESEX

St. James, Dukes Place (GL)

Marriage: *11 Jun 1667 Robert Kilbey & Ann Topson*
[Richard Tapson and Mary Knight were married in this church in 1681 (page 24.)]

St. Bride, Fleet Street (GL)

Baptism: *17 Oct 1713 George Tapson son of George & Margaret, Hanging Sword Alley*
[Hanging Sword Alley is off Whitefriars Street, south of Fleet Street.]

St. Dunstan, Stepney (GLRO)

Baptisms: *17 Oct 1725 Elizabeth dau of Jn^{o} Tapsome of Map(?) a Laborer(?) & Ann*
28 Jan 1735 George son of Jn^{o} Tepson of BG Cordwai^{r}(?) & Elizabeth
[This was the parish church of George Tapson, Mariner (page 98).]

St. George in the East, Stepney (GLRO)

Baptism: *28 Mar 1735 Joseph son of John Tapson Lab^{r} by Anne, Ratcliff High Way*

St. Botolph Without, Aldgate (GL)

Baptism: *4 Sep 1737 Joseph Tapson son of John & Ann, Eastsmithfield*
[East Smithfield runs eastwards from the Tower of London. See also the St. George in the East baptism above.]

St. Bene't, Paul's Wharf (GL)

Marriage: *18 Jan 1753 John Tapson of Barking, Essex Bachelor & Jane Cox of the same place Spinster*

St. Saviour, Southwark (GLRO)

Baptism: *8 Feb 1789 Lætitia dau of Richard Tapson Wheelwright & Jane*

St. Marylebone, Marylebone (GLRO)

Baptism: *29 Sep 1822 Charlotte dau of John & Charlotte Tapson, Marylebone, Serv^{t}*

APPENDIX II BIRTHS AND MARRIAGES REGISTERED 1837-1880

The following births and marriages have not been positively identified or referred to in the preceding text. Full birth certificates would give the names and addresses of the parents.

BIRTHS

1838, Q2	Laura Mary	Okehampton[1]	
1843, Q1	James Tapson (*sic*)	Exeter[2]	
1844, Q2	Sarah	Greenwich	
1844, Q3	Gertrude Ann	Exeter[3]	[Died 1846, Q4, Exeter]
1855, Q2	Robert	Bethnal Green[4]	
1857, Q3	Elizabeth	Plymouth	[Died 1857, Q3, Plymouth]
1858, Q1	Charlotte Alice	Plymouth	[Died 1859, Q3, St. George East]
1861, Q4	Elizabeth Morton	West Derby[5]	
1870, Q3	Mary Ann	Liverpool	[Died 1873, Q1, Liverpool]

MARRIAGES

1851, Q1	Charles William	Shoreditch[6]	
1857, Q4	Ann	Launceston	
1859, Q2	Louisa Jane	Portsea	(daughter of John Tapson p 220?)
1860, Q1	Sarah	Bethnal Green[4]	
1860, Q3	Mary Ann	Plymouth	
1867, Q4	Elizabeth	Launceston	
1867, Q4	Mary	Kensington	(sister of Ellen p 382?)
1868, Q2	Elizabeth	Launceston	

[1]Illegitimate child. The birth certificate states that Laura Mary Tapson was born on 17 March 1838 at *Park, Okehampton*, the daughter of *William Tapson, Servant*, and *Mary Hockaday*. The child was called Laura Mary Gratton after her mother's marriage to Abraham Gratton in 1847.

[2]Illegitimate child. The baptismal entry in the register of St. Edmund, Exeter, reads:

12 Mar 1843 James the illegitimate child of Ann Tapson, West Street, Huckster

[3]The funeral entry in the register of St. Mary Major, Exeter, reads:

23 Dec 1846 Gertrude Ann Tapson West Street 2 years

In the burial entry at St. Bartholomew New Cemetery Gertrude Ann's age is given as 2 years 7 months. The address, West Street, is the same as that given in James's baptismal entry, but it is not known whether the mother was again Ann Tapson.

[4]Robert's parents were named as *James Tapson, Hawker of Hearthstones*, and *Sarah Tapson, formerly Lowthorpe*, residing at *4 New Court, Bethnal Green*. The 1851 census for Bethnal Green (PRO HO107/1539 Fo. 47) contains the entry:

1 New Court

Sarah Lowthorpe	*Un(?)*	*25*		*Middlesex, Kingsland Rd.*	
James Star	*Mar(?)*	*45*	*Dealer in Hearth Stone*	*„*	*„*
Jane Star		*1(?)*		*„*	*„*

The return was incompletely, and not very legibly, filled in, and the column showing relationships to the head of the household was left blank.

Following the registration by *Sarah Tapson, Mother*, of the birth on 11 March 1855 of Robert Tapson, the death was registered at Bethnal Green on 29 December 1859 by *Sarah Tapson present at Death, 5 Myrings Place Bethnal Green*, of *James Tapson, 8 Years, Son of James Tapson a Hawker*, who died on 27 December 1859 of *Phthisis*. On each occasion Sarah made her mark. No marriage of James Tapson and Sarah was registered, nor was a subsequent death of this alleged father of her children, prior to Sarah's marriage in the church of St. Philip, Bethnal Green, to the man with whom she had been sharing a home in 1851:

10 Jan 1860	*James Starr*	*38*	*Bachelor*	*Labourer*	*Myrings Place*
			(Father: George Starr, Marine Stores Dealer)		
	Sarah Tapson	*32*	*Spinster*		*Myrings Place*
			(Father: James Tapson, Hawker)		

by Banns in the presence of William Sarvent(?) & Jane Stanson

(Continued on next page)

APPENDIX III MISCELLANEOUS CENSUS RETURNS •

1851	Bickleigh[7]	(PRO HO107/1877 Fo. 547):				
	Village of Jump					
	John Rowe	*Head*	*Mar*	*45*	*Ag Lab*	*Cornwall, St. Stevens*
	William Tapson	*Lodger*	*Un*	*40*	*Ag Lab*	*Devon, Tavistock*
1851	St. Nicholas, Deptford	(PRO HO107/1585 Fo. 67):				
	Belling Court(?)					
	Mary Cook	*Head*	*?*	*41*	*?*	*Ireland*
	Henry Tapson	*Lodger*	*Un*	*21(?)*	*Coal(?) Shipper(?)*	*Kent, Greenwich*
1881	Stoke-on-Trent	(PRO RG11/2727 Fo. 17):				
	32 Lonsdale St.					
	William Carter	*Head*	*Mar*	*26*	*Potter ...?...*	*Stafford*
	Margaret Carter	*Wife*	*Mar*	*32*		*Scotland*
	Charles L(?) Tapson	*Boarder*	*Mar*	*31*	*Travelling Vocalist*	*Lancashire, Liverpool*
	...?... Livermore	*„*	*Mar*	*27*	*„ „*	*?*
1881	Kenilworth[8]	(PRO RG11/3095 Fo. 39):				
	High Street					
	Thomas Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*24*	*Gas Fitter*	*Warwicksh, Leamington*
	Eliza Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*23*		*„ Kenilworth*
	Edith E. Tapson	*Dau*		*3*		*„ Leamington*
	Ethel E. Tapson	*Dau*		*1*		*„ Kenilworth*

The 1861 census for Bethnal Green (PRO RG9/263 Fo. 88) shows the couple still living in Myrings Place:

5 Myrings Pl					
James Star	*Head*	*Mar*	*44*	*Hawker*	*Middx*
Sarah Star	*Wife*	*Mar*	*36*		*„*
Robert Star	*Son*		*6*		*„*
Jane Star	*Dau*		*8 mo*		*„*

Robert Star named in this return must be the *Robert Tapson* born on 11 March 1855.

There is no clue to be found as to the identity of this James Tapson whom Sarah named as the father of her child Robert and also, at the time of her marriage to James Starr, as her own father! It is strange, too, that James Tapson and James Starr should each be described as Hawkers, or Dealers, in Hearth Stones. There were obviously some rum goings-on in Bethnal Green. No death of a James Tapson, other than those we already know about, was ever registered, so we must assume that the alleged father of Robert was one of these. The only ones known to have been in London in the 1850's were James Tapson of St. Germans (page 242) and James Tapson of Chelsea (page 346) who may have been up to his old tricks, hawking his wares in Bethnal Green as well as in Battersea.

[5]Parents named as *William Morton Tapson, Chronometer Maker Master*, and *Fanny Tapson, formerly Broad*, residing at *27 Wightman Street, West Derby*. No further registered Tapson births, deaths or marriages seem to refer to this family.

[6]*Charles William Tapson, Bachelor, Baker* married Emily Ingram on 13 March 1851 at St. Leonard, Shoreditch, both giving their address as *Norton Folgate*. Charles William's father was named as *Edward Tapson, Baker*. However, Charles William signed the register as *Charles William Tapsell.*

[7]It may have been this same William who was buried at nearby Plympton St. Mary:

22 Apr 1860 *William Tapson* *Union Workhouse* *52*

[8]The birth of Thomas William Tipton was registered (Worcester R.D.) in 1858, Q4. The marriage was registered in 1877, Q1 (Coventry R.D.) of Tom William Tipson, followed by the births (Warwick R.D.) of Edith Elizabeth Tipson in 1877, Q4, and of Emily Ethel Tipson in 1879, Q4 . The towns of Coventry, Warwick, Royal Leamington Spa and Kenilworth are very closely situated, in Warwickshire, and Worcestershire is an adjoining county. So this census return should refer to a Tipson family, a not infrequently occurring name (page 378).

• See also Appendix VI (Addenda)

APPENDIX IV THE TAPSOMS OF BARKING

A *John Tapson of Barking, Essex* was married on 18 January 1753 (page 373). It is not known whether it was a descendant of this John whose will was proved on 9 September 1830 in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury (PRO PROB11/1776 Fo. 214):

The Will of John Tapsom dated 22 July 1829

This is the last Will and Testament of me John Tapsom of Barking in the County of Essex Smack Owner ..... I give to my Brother Jonathan the Sum of Five pounds And as to all the Rest and Residue of my personal Estate and Effects I give the same to my dear Wife Frances for her to have the benefit thereof for her life and after her decease I give the same personal Estate and Effects to my Friend Mr John Tyler the younger of London Street London Fish Factor Son of Mr John Tyler of Clapton Fish Factor and I appoint the said Mr John Tyler the younger sole Executor of this my last Will and Testament In Witness whereof I have hereto set my Mark this twenty second day of July One thousand eight hundred and twenty nine *The Mark of the said John Tapsom*

Other Tapsons/Topsoms of Barking appear in the following census returns. The family has not been investigated and it is not known whether they were Tapsons whose name underwent a partial reversion to *Topsham* (page 16):

1851 Mile End Old Town, Stepney (PRO HO107/1553 Fo. 191):

12 Tredegar Square					
Henry Staples	*Head*	*Mar*	*66*	*Propr of Land & Houses*	*M'sex, Wapping*
.....					
Eliza Tapson	*Serv*	*Un*	*20*	*House Servant*	*Essex, Barking*

1861 *Don* (PRO RG9/4447 Fo. 67):

Benjamin Topson	*Un*	*26*	*AB Seaman*	*Essex, Barking*

[The Don was a Fishing Vessel registered at the Port of London, Tonnage: 56.]

1861 *Ann* (PRO RG9/4451 Fo. 60):

John Topsam	*Un*	*34*	*Mate*	*Essex, Barking*

[The Ann was a Fishing Smack registered at the Port of Barking, Tonnage: 28.]

1881 Barking (PRO RG11/1748 Fo. 68):

Maria Fieldell	*Wife*	*Mar*	*39*		*Essex, Barking*
.....					
Martha Topson	*Grandma*	*Wid*	*72*		*„ „*

1881 Gorleston, Suffolk (PRO RG11/1907 Fo. 31):

Selina Topsom (Wife)	*Head*	*Mar*	*36*		*Essex, Barking*
Abigail Topsom	*Dau*		*16*	*Net Maker*	*Suffolk, Gorleston*
Henry Topsom	*Son*		*15*	*Ship builder*	*„ „*
Clifford Topsom	*Son*		*8*	*Scholar*	*„ „*

[*Henry Topsom* was married (to Selina?) in 1864, Q1, and the births were registered of *Abigail Topson* in 1865, Q1, *Henry Topson* in 1866, Q2, and *Clifford James Tapsom* in 1872, Q2 (all Yarmouth R.D).]

1881 Poplar (PRO RG11/509 Fo. 112):

15 Robinhood Lane					
Benjamin Topsom	*Head*	*Mar*	*47*	*Fishmonger*	*Essex, Barking*
Rebecca Topsom	*Wife*	*Mar*	*38*		*„ Tilbury*
Lucy Topsom	*Dau*	*Un*	*17*		*Kent, Gravesend*
Rebecca Topsom	*Dau*		*15*		*Midx, Poplar*
James Topsom	*Son*		*13*		*„ „*
Benjamin Topsom	*Son*		*10*		*„ „*
Joseph Topsom	*Son*		*6*		*„ „*
Emily Topsom	*Dau*		*5*		*„ „*

[Benjamin was obviously the fisherman on the Don in 1861.]

APPENDIX V TOPSON, TEPSON, TOBSON, STAPSON, TOPSOM AND TOPSHAM

If, as circumstantial evidence seems to suggest, the Tapsons of South Petherwin were descendants of John Tapson of Freesabeare, then it will have been demonstrated in the foregoing pages that this John and his brother Nicholas and their wives, the sisters Katherine and Agnes Ebsworthy, were the ancestors of most, and perhaps all, of the present-day Tapsons. So what became of the descendants of the other Tapsons who were living in or close to Buckland Monachorum in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries?

One obvious answer to this question must be that the male line simply died out in the other branches of the Tapson family. It will be observed from the Buckland Monachorum parish register entries that many children baptized in that parish died as infants, so the stock of adult Tapson males was not as great as the list of baptisms might seem to suggest. Moreover, of the Tapson males who achieved adulthood some, especially those who became seafarers, met untimely deaths.

Another possible answer to the question is that a few of the early Tapsons may have emigrated. There is however, a third possible explanation: that in some branches of the family another name-change may have occurred. It has already been shown that *Topson, Tapsham, Topsham*, and other variations in spelling, have been written at various times for persons known to be members of the Tapson family. It is conceivable therefore that certain branches of the family permanently adopted one or other of these variations especially, perhaps, the descendants of those Tapsons who arrived in London in the early years of the Eighteenth Century including, just possibly, the Tapsoms of Barking. The Holborn St. Andrew baptisms (page 79) show several variations, any one of which may have become the established spelling for a branch of the family.

Some of the following marriage entries, not included in the preceding text, may also refer to members of the Tapson family:

DEVONSHIRE

2	Dec	1654	Jone Topson & Nathaniel Isake	Exeter, St. Peter's Cathedral
2	Dec	1665	Sampson Topson & Jan Shepcott	Heavitree*
7	Dec	1665	Sampson Topson & Jane Shopcott	Exeter, St. Sidwell*
25	Aug	1668	Jone Topson & Phillip Orchard	Plymouth, St. Andrew
25	Apr	1698	Frances Topson & Justus Dunsford	East Stonehouse, St. George
17	Jan	1699	Margaret Topson & John Seagar	Plymouth, St. Andrew
14	Apr	1630	Elinor Topsham & Thomas Riche	Exeter, St. Paul
21	May	1708	Richard Topsham & Jane Fox	Plymouth, St. Andrew
8	Jan	1671	Catherine Topsom & John Back	Crediton
7	Apr	1676	Elianor Stapson & Nathaniel Simons	Plymouth, S. Andrew

LONDON/MIDDLESEX

		1672	Edward Topson & Dorcas Fuller	All Hallows, London Wall
4	Sep	1768	James Topson & Elizabeth Dunsford	Westminster, St. Martin in the Fields
4	Aug	1776	John Richard Topson & Margaret Brownbill	„ „ „

A similar range of spellings occurs in the following baptismal entries:

LONDON/MIDDLESEX

17	Mar	1771	Elizabeth Topson, dau of Jas & Eliz	St. Botolph Without, Aldersgate
30	Jan	1820	William Sampson Topson, son of William Sampson & Isabella Richardson	Stepney, St. Dunstan
17	Feb	1748	Daniel Tepson, son of Daniel & Mary	Westminster, St. Martin in the Fields
17	Jul	1831	Jane Tobson, dau of Thomas & Mary	St. Pancras Old Church

*Sampson and Jane seem to have had two weddings. A marriage licence dated 1670 (MANN: Exeter Marriage Licences) is for *Sampson Tapson & Jane Earle of Exeter, Spinster.*

Other surnames which occur very frequently are *Tipson, Tibson* and *Topham*, though there is no good reason to assume that they are corruptions of the *Tapson* name. Nevertheless, the possibility suggests itself that *Topham* may be a corruption of *Topsham*, the name from which the *Tapson* name seems to have been derived. Even if it were, however, there is no justification in assuming that all people calling themselves *Topsham* are related: the name merely implies that their ancestors came from the parish of Topsham. Thus, for instance, John Topsham and Mary Topsham baptized at Topsham on 25 October 1713 and 9 February 1729, respectively, seem to have been foundlings presumably named after the parish in which they had been abandoned.

In the 1881 census the name *Topson* occurs in the following returns:

RG11/614 Fo. 43	for St. Mary, Lambeth
RG11/3671 Fo. 6	for Everton, Lancashire
RG11/4325 Fo. 99	for Farrensby, Yorkshire
RG11/5024 Fo. 81	for Monkton & Jarrow, Co. Durham

More information about these Topsons, and about some of the stray Tapsons listed in Appendices II and III, might be gleaned by searching the indexes of births, deaths and marriages for the name *Topson*. But that is a task for another day!

APPENDIX VI ADDENDA

(p 16) By the Sixteenth Century the surnames *Topp* and *Tapp* were of fairly frequent occurrence in north Devonshire, especially in the two adjoining parishes of North Molton and Bishop's Nympton. So it seems likely that they were alternative spellings of the same surname and that they were used interchangeably, probably for members of the same family.

(p 17) In 1643 Buckland Abbey was drawn into the Civil War when the house was captured by Royalist soldiers. In this war Sir Francis Drake the 2nd Baronet, grandson of Thomas and a strong supporter of the Parliamentarian cause, served as a Lt. Col. of the Plymouth Regiment of Horse. In 1644 King Charles I gave Buckland Abbey, with other estates, to his General in the West Country, Sir Richard *Skellum* Grenville. For two years Sir Richard Grenville used Buckland Abbey, which had once belonged to his grandfather, Sir Richard Grenville of the *Revenge* (page 11), as a Royalist headquarters while his troops besieged Plymouth. Early in 1646 the Abbey was stormed by the Parliamentary General Fairfax, who captured 200 men and their arms; Buckland Abbey was restored to the Drake family, little damaged.

(p 37) Sir Francis Drake the 1st Baronet was the son of Thomas, to whom Buckland Abbey and its estates had passed after the death of his brother, Sir Francis Drake, Knight (page 17). The baronetcy had been conferred on him by James I in recognition of his substantial financial aid to the king.

(p 49) Richard Brown's reference to William as his *uncle* suggests that the *Margareta Tapson* who married a *Richardus Browne* at Buckland Monachorum on 15 May 1598 (page 2) may have been William's sister, baptized 10 March 1581/2 (page 35), and (assuming this baptism took place soon after her birth) would therefore have married at the age of 16. Edward Tyther, according to the Chancery suit, was at Plymouth in about 1630; so it is possible that the Richard Brown whom he met there was a son of this Richard Brown and Margaret, though no baptismal entry for him has yet come to light.

(p 76) The two properties had already been the subject of an indenture (WDRO 224/2) dated 30 September 1604 between

1. William Knight of Mary Tavye, husbandman
   John Knight, vitler, and Willmott his wife
   John Chubb of Stondon
   Thomas Knight, brother of William and John Knight
2. Richard Tapshound of Buckland Monachorum
   Margarett his wife, daughter and coheiress of Henrye Stondon deceased
   Robert Foote and Thomasin his wife, the other daughter and coheiress

in which the parties of the first part *(for diverse Consideracons them makying) have given, granted and Surrendered* unto the parties of the second part a *tenement in Willesworthy within the parish of Petertavye ... sometyme the lande and Inheritance of the sayd Henry Stondon And also ... one peece or parcell of meadowe lyinge in Broadmeade in Warpysworthy Tavystocke being also the late Inheritance of the sayd Henry Stondon*

(p 78) It seems also to have been this William recorded in the book of Buckland Monachorum Parish Accounts 1599-1701 (WDRO 600/58) as falling into arrears with his *Parishe Rentts*: £1 - 9 - 0 due for the previous year in 1647, £1 - 10 - 0 in 1648, and £1 - 5 - 0 in 1649.

(p 80) It was probably either Thomas Tapson Senior or Thomas Tapson Junior recorded in the book of Buckland Monachorum Parish Accounts 1599-1701 (WDRO 600/58) as one of the two *Churchewardens* who *made their Accompte* on 13 May 1600 and again on 5 May 1622, and as one of the *Collectors of the otebooke 1620*. A Thomas Tapson, perhaps the same, is also mentioned in a note at the end of the Churchwardens' accounts dated 26 May 1607 as having paid rent due on 3 May past.

(p 86) It may have been John Tapson junior, then 28 years old, who was married at the church of Plymouth St. Andrew:

9 Mar 1686 ***John Tapson & Mary Teague***

Their daughter Elizabeth, buried at Bratton Clovelly twenty eight months later, may have been their first child, and the Mary Tapson baptized at Plymouth St. Andrew may have been their second:

30 Jan 1688 *Mary* *dau of John & Mary Tapson*

It is even possible that it was this Mary whose burial was recorded in the undated bishop's transcript.

(p 110) The churchwardens' accounts (WDRO 600/58) for 10 June 1617, three months after the burial of Robert Tapson, son of Robert, include the item:

more paid in at the accompt for Robert Tapsons grave vj^{s} $viij^{d}$

The sum of 6/8 (i.e. one third of a pound) seems rather high for an infant's grave, unless it was intended as the payment for a family plot.

(p 113) One of the churchwardens making their *accompt* in the book of Buckland Monachorum Parish Accounts 1599-1701 (WDRO 600/58) for .?. May 1599 was *Robert Tapsham*. A *Robert Tapson* was one of the *Waiewardens* making their *accompt* on 23 June 1611. It is likely that both of these entries refer to Robert Tapson Senior, as also may a mention of *Roburtt Tapson* in the churchwardens accounts for 30 May 1637, five months before his death.

(p 120) The book of Buckland Monachorum Parish Accounts 1599-1701 (WDRO 600/58) has entries for 20 April 1600, 11 May 1606, 12 April 1607, 17 May 1608, 6 June 1609, 22 April 1610 and 13 May 1611, each detailing the *accompte* made by *Richard Tapson Tinnewarden* — again probably the tithingman, who died in 1619.

(p 123) In the book of Buckland Monachorum Parish Accounts 1599-1701 (WDRO 600/58) the name *John Tapson* occurs frequently, though not all of these occurrences refer to the John Tapsons of Freesabeare. A John Tapson was one of the two *Churchewardens* who presented their *accompte* on 13 May 1611 and one of the *Otewardens* on 19 July 1612. This John may have been the John Tapson presenting tin for coinage in 1610 (page 120), but is unlikely to have been John I of Freesabeare who would have been barely 18 years old even at the later of these two dates. He may have been the John Tapson buried on 9 November 1617.

A John Tapson was one of the churchwardens presenting their *accompte* on 18 May 1630, 20 November 1630 and 31 May 1631. The only burials in the parish of a John Tapson after those dates were of *John son of Richard Tapson* on 18 May 1664 (an infant baptized on 15 May 1664), *John Tapson of Freesabeere* on 10 September 1665, *John Tapson of Beare* on 1 January 1665/6 and John II of Freesabeare on 5 May 1680. So the churchwarden in 1630 and 1631 may have been John I of Freesabeare or John Tapson of Beare.

The name John Tapson is mentioned, together with that of *Roburtt Tapson* (see Addendum to page 113) in the churchwardens accounts of 30 May 1637. Then, on 12 April 1640, included under the heading *the stocke of the poore of the parishe*, is the item:

Robertt Frienche uppon John Tapson Freesaby 1^{li} - 0 - 0

Under a like heading in 1641 appears the item:

Robertt Frenche uppon John Tapson Fresby 1^{li} - 0^{s} - 0^{d}

and on 7 April 1642:

Robert French uppon John Tapson fres j^{li}

and on 16 June 1644:

Roberte French uppon John Tapson fre) j^{li}

and on 19 May 1646:

John Tapson pd in for Roberte French 1^{li} - 00 - 0

It seems that John I of Freesabeare had to make an annual poor-relief payment of £1 for Robert French.

One of the churchwardens presenting their accounts on 31 May 1642 was a John Tapson, probably John I of Freesabeare (though possibly John Tapson of Beare). However, it is likely to have been John I of Freesabeare again contributing to parish relief in an item dated 28 May 1651 in which, under the heading *Arreares for the Church Rentts*, appears:

?Mk: Guy 0 - 4 which Jo: Tapson will pay

On 8 June 1652 one of the churchwardens presenting their accounts was John Tapson, and an entry for 16 June 1652 includes the items:

Received John Tapson uppon Phillip Anderton 1^{li}

and

The 1^{li} 10^{s} *which John Tapson was Bound for Silvester Collings is paid in*

and

The 20^{s} *which was left in the keekeepers hand is Lent unto John Nute uppon John Tapson*

(the keykeepers of the stock of the poor)

An entry for 31 May 1653, an inventory of goods delivered to the churchwardens, includes the item *one Booke Called Homiles in John Tapsons hands*. An entry of 16 April 1655 reads:

Delivered to John Tapson & to the Rest of the Keekeepers of the poore stocke 3^{li} 10^{s}

Another entry just dated 1656 reads:

John Nute upon John Tapson 01^{li} - 00^{s} - 00^{d}

and a similar entry appears in the accounts of 1 June 1658.

On 24 April 1660, on 4 June 1660, and in 1661 (undated) John Tapson was named as one of the overseers (of the poor). That these entries all refer to John I of Freesabeare is confirmed by an entry of 23 September 1661:

delivered to John Tapson of Frebeaarre 1^{li} 10^{s}

His involvement both as an overseer and as a substantial contributor to the poor-relief fund indicates the continuing prosperity of the Tapsons of Freesabeare, perhaps because John I, like his father, was also dealing in tin. He may have been the John Tapson named as presenting tin for coinage in 1627 and 1628 (page 120) along with his father.

On 19 May 1662 John Tapson was one of the churchwardens who *put their account*; one of their items refers to Sir Francis Drake the 2^{nd} Baronet who had died earlier that year:

..... the charge for the buriall of Sir Francis Drake is not yet accounted for .....

The final reference to a Tapson in the parish accounts book names John Tapson as one of the church wardens presenting their accounts on 12 May 1668. This must have been John II of Freesabeare, since John I had died in 1665.

(p 147) At the time of the 1851 census the Rockeys were living at Horrabridge, where they are listed in the return for Whitchurch (PRO HO107/1883 Fo. 310):

Horrabridge, Plymouth Old Road

James Rockey	*Head*	*Mar*	*34*	*Carpenter*	*Devon, Northlew*
Ann Rockey	*Wife*	*Mar*	*29*		*„ Bridestowe*
Mary Ann Rockey	*Dau*	*Un*	*7*		*„ „*
Elizabeth Rockey	*Dau*	*Un*	*3*		*„ Horrabridge*
Emma Rockey	*Dau*	*Un*	*8 mo.*		*„ „*
Richard Lane	*Journeyman*	*Un*	*21*	*Carpenter*	*„ Padstow*
William H. Martin	*Apprentice*	*Un*	*16*	*„*	*Cornwall, Penzance*

Ann should have given her age as 27. And Padstow is of course in Cornwall.

(p 148) The Wordens, married at Bridestowe on 26 October 1836 (page 128), were in Bridestowe for the 1841 census (PRO HO107/231/5 Fo. 8):

John Worden	*30-34*	*Ag Lab*	*Born in Devonshire*
Susanna Worden	*25-29*		*Born in Devonshire*
William Worden	*4*		*Born in Devonshire*
Susan Worden	*1*		*Born in Devonshire*

If she gave her age correctly, Susanna would have been born between about 1812 and 1816, so she may have been a daughter, not baptized at Bridestowe, of Nicholas B#48 and Mary. This Mary (page 147) and her son Ebsworthy (page 148) were the heads of the only Tapson households still in Bridestowe by 1841, when Ebsworthy appears on the same folio of the census return as the Wordens.

(p 150) Ellen married at Avenue Road Congregational Chapel, Hammersmith (Kensington R.D.):

5 Mar 1871	***Charles Jeffery***	*22*	*Bachelor*	*Labourer*	*7 George Street, Hammersmith*
				(Father:	*James Jeffery, Labourer)*
	Ellen Tapson	*21*	*Spinster*	*Servant*	*7 George Street, Hammersmith*
				(Father:	*Hepsworthy Tapson, Labourer)*

by Certificate in the presence of John Blight & Fanny Webber

Charles Jeffery was a witness at the marriage of his brother-in-law John in 1879 (*vide* page 150). (Possibly the 1867 Kensington R.D. marriage listed in Appendix II was that of Ellen's sister Mary.)

(p 155) The following marriage took place at Stoke Damerel:

15 Apr 1820 ***William Harris*** *of this Parish Miner &* ***Ann Tapson*** *of this Parish Spinster*
by Banns in the presence of ..... Johns, John Tapson & Sarah .....

The Harrises appear in the 1841 census return for Coryton (PRO HO107/231/11 Fo. 4), in which exact ages are recorded rather than age-bands:

Cory Mill			
William Harris	*42*	*Manganese Miner*	*Not born in Devonshire*
Ann Harris	*39*		*Born in Devonshire*
Maria Harris	*20*		*Born in Devonshire*
James Harris	*17*		*Born in Devonshire*
Francis Lotts	*26*	*Manganese Miner*	*Born in Devonshire*

Ann, one of the daughters of George and Mary, would have been exactly 39 years old at the time of this census; moreover, George's place of death was recorded, just one year later, as *Mill, Coryton*. Thus it seems that Ann Harris was his daughter, and that her first child, born within a year of the marriage, was named after her eldest sister who had died two and a half years before that marriage. It was probably Ann's husband who was a witness at the wedding of her brother Ebsworthy (page 318). Francis Lotts, the manganese miner living with the Harris family, was recorded on George's death certificate as the informant of his death and was *present at the death.*

(p 157) The 1851 census return for *Belleville Town, Hastings County, Ontario*, includes:†

	MARITAL STATUS	ETHNIC ORIGIN	AGE	BIRTHPLACE	OCCUPATION	RELIGION
Elizabeth Tapson	*Widow*	*English*	*51*	*England*	*School Teacher*	*C. of E.*
Caroline Tapson	*Daughter*	*English*	*24*	*England*	*School Teacher*	*C. of E.*

Elizabeth was the widow of William, Bridestowe #61, who had also been a teacher; if she gave her age correctly she would have been about 10 years younger than he had been. However, their daughter Caroline would have been 27 years old in 1851. Belleville is a little to the north of Lake Ontario. Elizabeth is again listed in the 1871 Canadian census return for *Belleville Town*:

Elizabeth Tapson *Head* *English* *71* *England* *School Teacher* *C. of E.*

Caroline married William Vandervoort at Belleville on 22 September 1874. On the marriage certificate her parents were named as William & Elizabeth Tapson; the groom, a widower aged 72, was born in New York State, U.S.A., the son of Francis and Hannah Vandervoort; he was described as a farmer residing at Sydney township, Hastings County.

† Information on Canadian census returns: 1851 and 1861 from Al and Anne Fice (*vide* footnote to page 429); 1871 from indexes of *www.ancestry.com* (images of originals unavailable); 1881 from indexes of *www.familysearch.org* (images unavailable)

The 1881 Canadian census for *Sydney, Hastings, West Ontario, Household 253,* lists:

William Vandervoort	*Married*	*German*	*79*	*U.S.A.*	*Farmer*	*C. Methodist*
Caroline Vandervoort	*Married*	*English*	*55*	*England*		*C. Methodist*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Widow*	*English*	*81*	*England*		*C. of E.*
Isabella Dow		*Scottish*	*16*	*Scotland*		*C. Methodist*

No information has so far come to light about William and Elizabeth Wonnacott, the other children of William and Elizabeth, but two deaths recorded at Hastings:*

24 July 1884 *William Tapson, born in England about 1821,*
31 July 1888 *Elizabeth Holl Tapson, born in England about 1800*

are of Elizabeth and, presumably, her son born in 1820, so it seems likely that Elizabeth and all her children emigrated to Ontario, perhaps about the same time as William's brothers Ebsworthy and Joseph (see the Addendum below for page 295); Ebsworthy's wife may have been Elizabeth's sister.

(p 176) At the time of the 1841 census Robert was already livng with Mary Ann in Finsbury, in the parish of St. Mary, Islington West:

Robert Tapson	*38*	*Carpenter*	*Not born in Middlesex*
Mary Ann Tapson	*36*		*Not born in Middlesex*

(p 179) In his will, dated 25 February 1861 and proved at Bodmin on 12 August 1863, Richard Lang left his farm at Tregada, held of the manor of Lawhitton by Copyhold, to Elizabeth Maddever Tapson, whom he also nominated as the sole executrix of his will, and after her decease to her surviving children in equal shares. Richard Lang left his other farm, Treween, in the parish of Altarnum, to his nephew John Lang, son of his brother John Burnard Lang.

In 1879, Q4, Ann Lang Tapson married Richard Symons; the 1881 census for Lawhitton (PRO RG11/2277 Fo. 81) shows that they had taken over the farm at Tregada:

Tregada

Richard Symons	*Head*	*Mar*	*56*	*Farmer*	*Cornwall, Southpetherwin*
Ann Symons	*Wife*	*Mar*	*40*		*Devon, Lifton*
Jessie Symons	*Dau*	*Un*	*15*		*Cornwall, Lawhitton*
Elizabeth Bariball	*Serv*	*Un*	*14*	*Gen Serv*	*Devon, Werrington*
George Lane	*Serv*	*Un*	*17*	*Farm Serv Indoors*	*Cornwall, Lawhitton*

Richard and Ann were still at Lawhitton for the 1891 census (PRO RG12/1804 Fo. 75):

Tregada

Richard Symons	*Head*	*Mar*	*66*	*Farmer*	*Cornwall, Southpetherwin*
Ann Symons	*Wife*	*Mar*	*50*		*Devon, Lifton*
William Ball	*Serv*	*Un*	*17*	*Farm Serv*	*Devon, Stowford*
Ellen Oliver	*Serv*	*Un*	*11*	*Dom Serv*	*Cornwall, Southpetherwin*

Ann seems to have had no (surviving) children: Jessie, listed in the 1881 census, must have been Richard Symons's daughter by an earlier marriage.

Lois Cech, a descendant of William Lang Tapson, writes that his younger sister, Elizabeth, went to India with her husband, who was a military man, and that after his discharge from the army they took up farming in Kansas, U.S.A. Eking out an existence on the farm they had purchased was hard, but during one particular drought they made a considerable amount of money by selling water from a spring on their property to their neighbours, after which they ran a successful business bottling and selling water. Whilst they were farming they had hired a boy to help them, whom they eventually adopted. At some stage after her husband's death Elizabeth married her adopted son. Elizabeth, like her sister, Ann Lang Symons, had no (surviving) children, and when she died the water-bottling business passed to her husband/adopted son.

* From indexes of *www.ancestry.com* (images unavailable)

(p 179) William Lang Tapson was presumably already in the U.S.A. when his wife and family arrived at New York on 3 November 1884 aboard the *Spain* from Liverpool, England, and Queenstown, Ireland; they are listed as *Helen 45, Edith 20, Lilly* (presumably Amelia) *18, Mellie* (presumably Helen) *16, Emily 13, John 11, Wm 8, Harold 4.** William Lang died at Chicago on 1 April 1902, aged 64 years; a household in the 1910 US Federal Census for *Cook, Illinois*, includes his widow and youngest son:

Helen Tapson	*69*	*England*	*Head*	*Widow*	
Harold Tapson	*23*	*England*	*Son*	*Single*	*Clerk (Hardware)*

together with 13 other people, probably lodgers. Harold's age should have been given as 30. The family of William Lang's eldest son appears in another *Cook* household:

John L Tapson	*37*	*England*	*Head*	*Married*	*Clerk (Bank)*
Helen C Tapson	*34*	*Scotland*	*Wife*	*Married*	
William L Tapson	*7*	*Illinois*	*Son*	*Single*	
Helen R Tapson	*4*	*Illinois*	*Dau*	*Single*	

William Lang's middle son and his family are listed in a third household in *Cook*:

William R Tapson	*35*	*England*	*Head*	*Married*	*Clerk (Bank)*
Sybelle C Tapson	*27*	*Illinois*	*Wife*	*Married*	
William R Tapson	*7*	*Illinois*	*Son*	*Single*	
Catherine F Tapson	*5*	*Illinois*	*Dau*	*Single*	
Mary E Tapson	*3*	*Illinois*	*Dau*	*Single*	
Dora Walton	*33*	*England*	*Cousin*	*Single*	

John Lang died at Chicago on 29 September 1910, aged 38 years.

The 1920 US Federal Census return for *Cook* shows that William Reginald now has two more sons, *John L Tapson 7* and *Samuel E Tapson 3* 5/12. And the 1920 return for *Kanzas, Jackson, Missouri*, contains the entries:

Harold Tapson	*41*	*England*	*Head*	*Married*	*Stockman (Cattle)*
Edith M Tapson	*35*	*Iowa*	*Wife*	*Married*	*Accountant*

(p 186) In the 1861 census return for Devon, Marystow, the household at *Lew Down* of John Gerry, a cordwainer, and his wife includes:

John Tapson Apprentice Un 16 Cordwinder Devon, Marystow

and in the 1861 return for Cornwall, Stoke Climsland, the household at *Downhouse* of John P. Philip, a farmer, and his family includes:

James Tapson Serv Un 14 Serv Devon, Bradwood

Jane Tapson 34 Spinster who arrived at New York on 11 October 1886 aboard the *Servia* from Liverpool and Queenstown* may have been Jane Doidge Tapson. Jane Doidge would then have been 38, but she had already lost a year by the time of the 1881 census. It is likely to be Jane Doidge (the age is now right) listed at *Prescott, Yavapai, Arizona*, in the 1900 US Federal Census:

Jane Tapson 52 England Servant Single Cook

In the 1910 US Federal Census Jane appears in the return for *Creighton, Maricopa, Arizona*:

Jane Tapson 60 England Head Single Own income

Jane, who has probably retired, is now living alone.†

(p 187) The 1871 census return for the parish of St Mary, Whitechapel, has the entry:

London Hospital

Nicholas Tapson Patient Mar 30 Tailor M'sex, Stoke Newington

A return for Nicholas's wife and two children has not been found. A passenger on the *Greece* arriving at New York from London on 9 June 1876 was *Nicholas Tapson 35, Tailor*;* this was the exact age and occupation of Nicholas Tapson of Woolwich. However, less that five years later Nicholas was back in England and is included in the 1881 census return for London, West Plumstead:

2 Osborn Villa

Nicholas Papson	*Head*	*Mar*	*40*	*Tailor*	*Devon, Stowford*
Emma Papson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*45*	*Dressmaker*	*London*
Mark Papson	*Son*	*Un*	*14*	*Scholar*	*South Hackney*

* *www.ancestry.com* New York Passenger Lists 1820-1900 (images viewed)

† In 1891 Jane's sister Elizabeth, 37, was a *Boarding House Keeper* at Tormoham, Torquay, with 3 boarders and 3 servants

The purpose of Nicholas's visit to New York is unclear; perhaps it was intended that his wife and their children should follow, but that Nicholas returned to England later that year after the the death of their daughter, Emma. Nicholas and Emma are included in the 1891 census for London, Plumstead, living at *143 Herbert Road* (page 187).

The census of 31 March / 1 April 1901 for London, Woolwich, lists:

5 Eglinton Road

Nicholas Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*60*	*Tailor*	*Devon, Stowford*
Emma Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*65*	*Dressmaker*	*London, St. Lukes*

and the 1901 census for London, Fulham, lists the family of Mark and Clara (née Holbrook):

44 Hazlebury Rd

Mark Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*33*	*Railway Clerk*	*London, Hackney*
Clara Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*34*		*London, S. Newington*
John Tapson	*Son*		*6*		*London, Battersea*
Harry Tapson	*Son*		*4*		*London, Fulham*
Winifred Tapson	*Dau*		*1*		*London, Fulham*

The marriage of *Mark William* had been registered (Hackney R.D.) in 1891, Q1; in 1892, Q3, the birth was registered (Woolwich R.D.) of Robert Nicholas C. Tapson, and his death (Wandsworth R.D.) in 1894, Q2 ; a birth certificate would be needed to confirm that this was Mark William's son, but the name Nicholas suggests that he was named after his grandfather — and perhaps the C stood for Clay? Moreover, just after his death the birth of John Mark was registered, also in the Wandsworth R.D., in 1894, Q3. Three births were registered (Fulham R.D.): Henry William in 1896, Q3, Winifred Emma in 1899, Q4, and Helen Agnes C. in 1907, Q4; the first three surviving children appear in the 1901 census (above) and Rita Todd, a daughter of Winifred Emma, recognizes the fourth as her aunt. John Mark married Maude Snell in 1919, Q4, Henry William married Maude G. Jeeves in 1922, Q1, and Winifred Emma married Giuseppe Campana in 1926, Q3; all these marriages were registered in the Wandsworth R.D. Helen Agnes did not marry. The death of *Clara Tapson 76* was registered in 1943, Q2 (Surrey Mid-East R.D.) and that of *Mark W. Tapson 86* in 1953, Q2 (Ealing R.D.); this was his exact age.

(p 188) It may be because he had emigrated that William's son, John George, was only a minor beneficiary in William's will. The index of *Unassisted Immigration to Victoria, 1852-1923* of the Public Record Office, Victoria, Australia,* includes:

		ARRIVES	SHIP
John G Tapson	*23*	*Jan 1853*	*St George*

However, John George would have been 31 when the St George arrived at Victoria. And he would have been 32 when a passenger included in the index of *Outward Passengers from Victoria (Incomplete)* of the Public Record Office, Victoria, Australia,* is listed as:

		SHIP	DEPARTS	DESTINATION
John Tapson	*29*	*Westwind II*	*Jan 1854*	*Adelaide*

No further evidence has yet come to light to confirm that this passenger was William's son, John George.

(p 190) The Tapson listed in the 1901 census for Cornwall, Bodmin:

R Tapson Patient Un 58 Inmate of Asylum (pauper) Cornwall Lunatic

was probably the son of Robert and Catherine. The age given for him is consistent with that given at the time of his death, registered at Bodmin; so Robert probably died in Bodmin Lunatic Asylum.•

(p 192) In 1861 Catherine and all her surviving children except Robert and Nicholas are included in the census return for Exeter, St. Mary Major:

Catherine Tapson	*Head*	*Wid*	*46*	*Plain Worker*	*Cornwall, South P.*
Mary Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*23*	*„ „*	*Devon*
Ebsworthy Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*19*	*Marine Store Dealer*	*Devon*
Charlotte Tapson	*Dau*		*14*		*Devon*
Sarah Tapson	*Dau*		*7*	*Scholar*	*Devon, Exeter*

• Robert would have been 80 years old when the death was registered (Bodmin R.D.) in 1921, Q4, of a *Robert Tapson aged 78*

* *www.access.prov.vic.gov.au/public* (images unavailable)

Mary and her daughter are included in the 1871 return for Exeter, St. Mary Major:

1 Jews Court

Thomas Loveridge	*Head*	*?*	*32*	*Cattle Driver*	*Devon, Axminster*
Mary Ann Tapson	*Lodger*	*Un*	*36*	*Charwoman*	*Cornwall, Launceston*
Alice Tapson	*Lodger*		*1*		*Devon, Exeter*

(p 194) Robert's widow was living with her eldest son, William Robert, at the time of the 1901 census for Devon, Wolborough with Newton Abbot:

10 Shilton(?) Road

William R Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*36*	*Coachman Not Domestic*	*Devon, Newton Abbot*
Elizabeth A Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*27*		*Devon, Ashton*
William E Tapson	*Son*		*1M*		*Devon, Newton Abbot*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Mother*	*Wid*	*61*	*Widow of a furniture dealer*	*Devon, Topsham*

William Robert had married Elizabeth Annie A. Cleave in 1900, Q2. The birth of William Edward had been registered in 1901, Q1 (Newton Abbot R.D.). The birth of Hilda May, probably the second child of William and Elizabeth, was registered (Newton Abbot R.D.) in 1904, Q1, and her death in 1904, Q3 (St. Thomas R.D.), the family having by then moved to Crediton. Then were registered (St. Thomas R.D.) the births of Walter Arthur in 1906, Q3, Reginald in 1909, Q1, Edna A. in 1911, Q2, and Mabel Helen in 1913, Q4, followed by the death of William Edward, aged 13, in 1914, Q4. After William Robert became confined to a wheelchair he was appointed postmaster at Lower Ashton Post Office, then later moved to Crediton, where his wife died in 1939, Q2, aged 65. He went to live with his daughter Mabel Helen at Yeovil in Somersetshire, where he died in 1951, Q4, aged 86.*

Robert's youngest daughter, Mabel Fanny, who later in 1901 married Ernest George Snowden at London, St. Giles, was listed in the 1901 census for London, St. Marylebone:

1 New Street

Mabel Tapson	*Boarder*	*Un*	*22*	*Lady Help Dom*	*Devon, Newton Abbot*

(p 196) By the time of the 1891 census Ebsworthy and Jane were both dead. Their son Robert was living with a farmer in Kingskerswell parish, near Newton Abbot, at Water Lane:

Robert Tapson	*Servant*	*Un*	*16*	*Labourer*	*Devon, Newton Abbot*

Emanuel was living with his uncle Robert (page 194), and Sidney was in Wolborough Union Workhouse:

Sidney Tapson	*Pauper*		*9*		*Devon, Newton Abbot*

At the time of the 1901 census these three sons of Ebsworthy and Jane were included in three separate households in the return for for Devon, Wolborough with Newton Abbot:

Robert Tapson	*Servant*	*Un*	*26*	*Ostler and General Labourer*	*Devon, Exeter*
Sydney R Tapson	*Servant*	*Un*	*20*	*Boots General Labourer*	*Devon, Newton Abbot*
Emanuel Tapson	*Servant*	*Un*	*24*	*Horse Driver*	*Devon, Newton Abbot*

Their only other surviving son, Peter Francis, has not been found in the 1891 census or the 1901 census. Sidney Reuben Tapson, Private 10750, of the 8th Battalion of the Devonshire Regiment, died in action in France on Saturday, 25 September 1915; he was 35 years old. Emanuel George died in 1942, Q2 (Totnes R.D.) aged 65. Peter Francis died in 1963, Q1 (Barnstaple R.D.); his age was recorded as 75, but he would have been 79 years old. None of these three brothers seems to have married.

Ebsworthy's daughter Jane is shown in the 1891 census for Devonshire, Tormoham, Torquay:

1 Pennsylvania Road

Jane Tapson	*Visitor*	*Un*	*16*	*Housemaid*	*Devon, Newton Abbot*

The 1901 census for Cheshire, Birkenhead, shows that Jane had an illegitimate child before her marriage in 1899 (page 196); the birth of Robert James was registered in 1896, Q3 (Newton Abbot):

53 Holt Hill

George C Johnson	*Head*	*Mar*	*21*	*Railway .....man*	*Devon, Torquay*
Jane Johnson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*27*		*Devon, Newton Abbot*
Robt J Tapson	*Stepson*		*4*		*Devon, Newton Abbot*
Harold Johnson	*Son*		*1*		*Cheshire, Birkenhead*

*Source: Paul Wright of Canberra, a descendant of William Robert

(p 197) In the 1901 census for Devon, Highampton, Nicholas at last gives his correct place of birth:

Golden Inn

Nicholas Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*60*	*Cattle Dealer*	*Devon, Stowford*
Julia M Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*43*		*Devon, Sidbury*
Meta Webber	*Sister in Law*	*Un*	*28*		*Devon, Sidbury*
John Webber	*Nephew*		*7*		*Devon, Highampton*

(p 198) The 1841 census for Devonport, East Stonehouse, makes it clear that Mary Bailey had a daughter, Elizabeth, before her marriage to Christopher (*vide* page 199):

Hobart St.

Chris^{r} Tapson	*35-39*	*Sailor*	*Born in Devonshire*
Mary Tapson	*35-39*	*Female Servant*	*Born in Devonshire*
Elizth Bailey	*12*		*Not born in Devonshire*
Mary Tapson Jun^{r}	*5*		*Born in Devonshire*
Robert Tapson	*2*		*Born in Devonshire*

(p 203) The 1901 census return for Hampshire, Portsmouth, includes William's daughter Daisy, who married Joseph Austen Raymond (Portsea R.D.) in 1898, Q2:

116 Queen Street

William Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*58*	*Commercial Clerk*	*Kent, Woolwich*
Jane Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*58*		*Kent, Deptford*
Daisy Raymond	*Dau*	*Mar*	*28*		*Cheshire, Rockferry*
Violet Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*21*		*Hants, Brockhurst*
Dorothy Hyatt	*Niece*	*Un*	*7*		*London, Chiswick*
Norma Hyatt	*Niece*	*Un*	*5*		*London, Chiswick*
Grace Hyatt	*Niece*	*Un*	*1*		*London, Chiswick*

In 1891 William's son, William Christopher J. was included in the census for Pembroke:

Hut Encampment Barracks

William Tapson	*Soldier*	*Un*	*21*	*Corporal 2nd Duke of Cornwall L.I.*	*Plumstead, Woolwich*

He married Winifred Jones (Portsea R.D.) in 1895, Q3; it seems likely that Helen, whose birth and death were registered (Portsea R.D.) in 1899, Q4, was their first child. They are listed in the 1901 census return for Southampton, Portsmouth:

Edinburgh Road *The site of the New Naval Barracks in course of erection — workmen's dwellings thereon (Temporary)*

William Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*31*	*Builder's Clerk*	*Kent, Woolwich*
Winifred Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*30*		*Hants, Portsmouth*

The birth of Violet Edith K. was registered at Portsmouth in 1902, Q2. Lilian Helen, born 1904, Q2, died 1905, Q3, also at Portsmouth, was probably another daughter. *William C J Tapson 36 Clerk* was a passenger on the *Philadelphia* arriving at New York from Southampton on 13 March 1906;* his wife and daughter arrived at New York from Southampton on 16 September 1906 aboard the *New York*; they were listed as *Winnifred Tapson 35yr 9mth* and *Violet E K Tapson 4yr 4mth*.* The family appear in the 1910 census for *Manhattan*:

William Tapson	*40*	*England*	*Head*	*Married*	*Clerk for Accountants*
Winnifred Tapson	*39*	*England*	*Wife*	*Married*	
Violet Tapson	*8*	*England*	*Dau*		
William Tapson	*2*	*New York*	*Son*		

(p 208) Mary married a Tavistock man and they subsequently set up home in that town, so it was probably this Mary who was included in the 1841 census for Tavistock (PRO HO107/249/11 Fo. 11):

Barley Market Street

Charles Henry Daw	*33*	*Draper*	*Not born in Devonshire*
Mary Tapson	*20*	*Assistant*	*Not born in Devonshire*

* *www.ancestry.com* New York Passenger Lists 1820-1900 (images viewed)

(p 211) The 1871 census return for Bristol, St. James, has the entry:

5 Broadmead

James W Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*44*	*Licensed Victualer*	*Cornwall, Launceston*
Emma E Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*49*		*Dorset, Weymouth*
Emma K Tapson	*Dau*		*13*		*Bristol City & Co*

(p 212) In 1881 John and his son appear in a different census return (PRO RG11/2196) for Plymouth, St. Andrew, from that of his wife and younger daughter (*vide* page 212); this may be because Elizabeth and Ann were visiting a friend or because the marriage had already broken down:

6 Albert Road

John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*49*	*Accountant*	*Cornwall, Launceston*
John R Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*18*	*Warehouseman*	*Devon, Exeter*

John's widow, Elizabeth Ann, has not been found in the census of 1891 or 1901, though it seems to have been her death registered in 1904, Q4, in Islington. It was probably John Richard Hill, her son, who was included in the 1901 census for London, Islington, but he would have been 38 — and married:

John Tapson	*Boarder*	*Un*	*35*	*Private Secretary*	*Devon, Exeter*

His wife Lydia (née Hodges) is listed in the 1901 census for Essex, Leyton:

63 Church Road

Maria Hodges	*Head*	*Wid*	*72*		*Gloucs, Chalford*
Lydia Tapson	*Dau*	*Mar*	*36*	*Boot Machinist*	*Middlesex, Homerton*
Thomas Hodges	*Son*	*Un*	*30*	*Cabinet Maker*	*Middlesex, Homerton*

The age given for Lydia is consistent with that given at the time of her death three and a half years later. Soon after the second marriage (page 213) of John Richard Hill in 1906, Q4, to Clara Lawes the *Canada* arrived at Portland, Maine, from Liverpool on 9 February 1907; included among its passengers were *John R H Tapson 38, Clara Tapson 25*, and *Queenie Tapson 9*.*

(p 213) An index of *Unassisted Immigration to Victoria, 1852-1923* of the Public Record Office, Victoria, Australia,° includes *Ebsworthy Tapson, 28, Jane C. Tapson, 28, Kate Tapson, 1*, arriving on the *Kent* in September 1867. The birth of Kate C. had been registered (Plymouth R.D.) in 1866, Q1. Another child (details not researched) was born in Victoria in 1867† and Ebsworthy died in 1869.† The website of the Baths,‡ an old Irish landed family, the de Bathes of Athcarne, Meath, states that **William Henry Bath** (6 Sep 1835 — 31 Aug 1910) of St. Stephens, Carlton, Victoria, Australia, married **Jane Cecilia Tapson née Langston** at Richmond, Victoria, Australia, on 9 July 1872, and that they had a son, John Bath, born 19 Aug 1881.

(p 214) Louisa was baptized in the Launceston Wesleyan Chapel on 29 December 1829:

Louisa dau of James & Grace Tapson of Launceston, Butcher (born 12 Dec 1829)

She would have been 6 years old when she died.

(p 216) Included in the 1901 census for Cornwall, St. Mary Magdalene, are:

Northgate Street

William Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*67*	*Living on Own Means*	*Cornwall, Launceston*
Dorcas Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*67*		*Cornwall, Stratton*

(p 220) In December 1812 there were 1,076 baptisms at Stoke Damerel parish church, of which 312 took place on the last day of the month, including:

31 Dec 1812 Ann dau of John & Maria Tapson (born 4 Aug 1811)

(p 221) That Ebsworthy John Tapson married Ann Fittock on 10 June 1833 is confirmed by the birth certificates of their last two children: Ann, born on 31 July 1847 at 19 Elm Grove, West Derby, and John Ebsworthy, born exactly two years later on 31 July 1849 at Cobden Street, Everton. The parents are named as *John Tapson, House Agent, and Ann Tapson, formerly Fittock*.•

* *www.ancestry.com* New York Passenger Lists 1820-1900 (images viewed)

° *www.access.prov.vic.gov.au/public* (images unavailable)

† *www.australia.gov.au/419*

‡ *www.freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~bathonia/Pedigree7.htm*

• Copies of birth certificates provided by Graham Caldwell, husband of a descendant of Ebsworthy John

(p 224) Henry John Tapson had a Church of Scotland wedding in the parish of Cromarty:*

20 Oct 1856 ***Henry Tapson*** *21 Bachelor Seaman Cromarty*
(Father: John Tapson, Solicitor Mother: Ann Tapson née Fittock)
Jane Taylor *18 Spinster Cromarty*
(Father: Donald Taylor, Labourer Mother: Isabella Taylor née McKay)
in the presence of George Russell (?), John Benchlow (?) & Thomas McCullock

However, Henry John's father was not a solicitor: in the 1851 census John Ebsworthy had given his occupation as *Attorney's Clerk*, from 1849 to 1852 he was listed as *House Agent and collector* and from 1860 to 1870 as *Accountant*, in 1865 he was described as *Licensed Victualler* in his bankruptcy proceedings, and in the 1871 census he was described as a *Cart Owner*! If he was baptized soon after his birth, Henry John would have been 20 years old at the time of this marriage.●

There is some confusion, perhaps intentional, about another marriage, this time at the Church of St. Michael, Toxteth:*

19 May 1872 ***Henry John Tapson*** *22 Bachelor Porter Lark Lane*
(Father: Henry John Tapson, Porter)
Eliza Birchdale *22 Spinster Lark Lane*
(Father: John Birchdale, Porter)
in the presence of George Thompson & Kate Thompson

If this Henry John was a son of the Henry John married in 1856 he would have been no more than 15 years old, unless conceived many years before the earlier marriage whilst the groom in that marriage was still in his mid-teens; however, no such birth was registered in England, in Wales or in Scotland. The alternative possibility is that the son of Ebsworthy John was remarrying bigamously in 1872 and covering his tracks by giving a false age (he would have been 36 years old, not 22) and a wrong name for his father so that the authorities might not discover his crime. Henry John and Eliza then disappear from the records, so they may have emigrated.

(p 224) A marriage took place at the church of St. Mary Kirkdale, Walton on the Hill:*

6 April 1870 ***John Tapson*** *Full Bachelor Mariner 33 Gordon St., Everton*
(Father: John Tapson, Solicitor)
Hellen O Callaghan *Full Spinster 33 Gordon St., Everton*
(Father: John O Callaghan, Deceased)
in the presence of Thomas Thompson & Owen Hughes

John Ebsworthy Tapson, like his father, did not use the name *Ebsworthy* and, like his brother, stated that his father was a solicitor. Soon a birth was registered at Mount Pleasant, Liverpool R.D.:

30 June 1870 Mary Ann, dau of John Tapson, Seaman, & Ellen Tapson, formerly Callaghan, 5 Court, Hawke Street

Mary Ann's death was registered at Islington Square, Liverpool R.D.:

3 Jan 1873 Mary Ann Tapson, 2 years, Broncho Pneumonia Certified, 9 Court, Bolton St.

Two births were then registered at West Derby, the name of the mother coming as a surprise:

28 Feb 1874 Annie, dau of John Tapson, Seaman, & Eliza Tapson, formerly Morgan 33 Sherdley Street, West Derby

18 Aug 1876 John William Henry, son of John Tapson, Mariner, & Eliza Tapson, formerly Morgan, 1 Alma Street, Everton

Another son, Henry, was born in 1879, Q1, the family was listed in the 1881 census, and Henry died in 1884, Q4 (*vide* page 224). The birth of another son was registered at Liverpool R.D.:

11 Nov 1881 Alfred Fletcher, son of John Tapson, Labourer, & Eliza Tapson, formerly Morgan, 111 Roderick Street

No marriage of a John Tapson to Eliza Morgan had been registered. It will become apparent that this John was also John Ebsworthy, who seems to have left his wife, Hellen (or Ellen) Callaghan, but no divorce petition had been submitted. (There is the possibility that the 1872 marriage was that of John Ebsworthy, both groom and bride giving false names.) The death of an Ellen Tapson, aged 30, was registered (Liverpool R.D.) in 1880, Q2; the same age as John Ebsworthy, she was probably his wife. And the death of Eliza Tapson, aged 42, was registered in 1891, Q3 (West Derby R.D.).

* Copies of birth, marriage and death certificates referred to on this page provided by Graham Caldwell

● In the 1861 census return for Kirkdale, Everton, the household of F. A. Miale includes: *Jane Tapson Serv Un 22 Scotland*

John Ebsworthy Tapson married again, this time in the church of St. Saviour, Everton:*

27 Dec 1897	***John Tapson***	*39*	*Widower*	*Labourer*	*25 Kendal Street*
			(Father: John Tapson deceased, Solicitor)		
	Ellen Price	*27*	*Widow*		*25 Kendal Street*
			(Father: Matthew Lees, Driver)		

in the presence of William Frederick Kirkham and Jane Kirkham

Two births were then registered at Everton South:

3 Dec 1898 *William Albert, son of John Tapson, Plasterer's Labourer, & Ellen Tapson, late Price formerly Lees, 89 Rishton Street, Everton*

12 Mar 1900 *Robert Purvis, son of John Tapson, Plasterer's Labourer, & Ellen Tapson, late Price formerly Lees, 46 Rishton Street, Everton*

The 1901 census return for Liverpool, Everton, lists:

109 Hodson Place

John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*47*	*Plasterer's Labourer*	*Lancs, Liverpool*
Ellen Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*32*		*Lancs, Liverpool*
Alfred Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*18*	*Plasterer's Labourer Apprentice*	*Lancs, Liverpool*
James Tapson	*Son*		*5*		*Lancs, Liverpool*
William Tapson	*Son*		*2*		*Lancs, Liverpool*
Robert Tapson	*Son*		*1*		*Lancs, Liverpool*

The inclusion of Alfred confirms that John Ebsworthy was the father of Eliza's children, though Alfred would have been 19 at the time. (James may have been a son of Ellen Price by her former husband — no birth of a James Tapson had been registered around 1895.)

At the time of the 1897 marriage John Ebsworthy would have been 48 years old and at the time of the 1901 census he would have been 51, so the fact that he had aged 8 years in the period of just over three years indicates that he was flexible regarding his age: at the time of the 1881 census he had already taken one year off his age (*vide* page 224); by the time of the 1901 census he had taken off four years. That the John who married Ellen Callaghan, had a bigamous union with Eliza Morgan and then married Ellen Price, was John Ebsworthy is a conclusion further supported by the fact that he was the only John Tapson whose birth was registered in Lancashire around the time of his birth.

John Ebsworthy's daughter, Annie, was 22 when she married a Robert Purvis in 1896, Q4 (West Derby R.D.); she is included in the 1901 census for Lancashire, West Derby:

30 Linton St

Annie Purvis	*Head*	*Wid*	*26*	*Charwoman*	*Lancs, Liverpool*
Emily Tapson	*Sister*		*15*	*Charwoman*	*Lancs, Liverpool*

together with a boarder. So Emily must have been another child of John Ebsworthy and Eliza; the birth of Emily Georgina was registered (Liverpool R.D.) in 1885, Q2. The *Alfred Tapson 19* whose death was registered (W. Derby R.D.) in 1903, Q1, would seem to be Alfred Fletcher, but he would have been 21. William Albert, a *decklayer*, married Edith Bailey at Everton on 23 June 1918, and Robert Purvis married Sarah Brackenridge (W. Derby R.D.) in 1922, Q3.

The 1901 census for Lancashire, West Derby, has the entry:

Horvick(?) St

John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*23*	*Plasterer's Labourer*	*Lancs, Liverpool*
Jane Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*20*		*Lancs, West Derby*
John Tapson	*Son*		*1½*		*Lancs, Liverpool*
Nelly Tapson	*Dau*		*9M*		*Lancs, Liverpool*

A Plasterer's Labourer like his father, John Ebsworthy's son John William Henry would have been 24 years old at the time of this census; his was probably the marriage registered (West Derby R.D.) in 1899, Q3. The birth of Eleanor (Nelly?) was registered (West Derby R.D.) in 1900, Q3, but the birth of John Tapson, aged *1½*, seems not to have been registered.

* Copies of birth and marriage certificates referred to on this page provided by Graham Caldwell

All William Barker Tapson's family are listed in the 1901 return for Lancashire, Everton:

34 Alma Street

Elizabeth Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*46*		*Lancs, Liverpool*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*21*	*Cigarette Packer*	*Lancs, Liverpool*
Robert Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*18*	*General Labourer*	*Lancs, Liverpool*
William Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*15*	*Grocer's Assistant*	*Lancs, Liverpool*
John Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*13*	*Shipowner's Clerk*	*Lancs, Liverpool*
Margaret Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*9*		*Lancs, Liverpool*

William Barker was again away from home at the time of the census, so he may have been a mariner. The birth of Margaret Annie had been registered (West Derby R.D.) in 1892, Q1.

(p 226) No 1841 Stoke Damerel census return has so far been found for Ebsworthy's household, unless it be the following (PRO HO107/273/4 Fo. 35):

King St

Wm Tapson	*50-54*	*Merchant*	*Born in Devonshire*
Mary Tapson	*25-29*		*Born in Devonshire*
Ann Tapson	*20-24*		*Born in Devonshire*
Henry Tapson	*20-24*		*Born in Devonshire*
James Tapson	*15-19*		*Born in Devonshire*
Eliza Davies	*30-34*	*Ind*(ependent)	*Born in Devonshire*
Jane Adams	*25-29*		*Born in Devonshire*

Ebsworthy would have been 51 years old at the time, his wife, Mary, 55 (if her age was given correctly in 1851), his son Ebsworthy was already married and living in Newport (page 228), and his other children were Caroline Augusta, 27, Ann Louisa, 23, Henry Ebenezer, 20, and James John, 16. If it be assumed that the enumerator made two errors, writing *Wm* instead of *Ebsworthy* for the head of the household and putting Mary in the 25-29 age-band instead of the 55-59 age-band, then the next three names are just those of Ebsworthy's children, in their correct age-bands, apart from Caroline Augusta, who was to be married just two days after the census when her address was recorded in the marriage register as 1 Morice Square (page 225), although she was not listed there in the 1841 census. It may even be that Eliza Davies was a sister of the groom, already in Stoke Damerel for the wedding.

(p 227) The family of James John Tapson was essentially unchanged at the time of the 1891 census, but he was then employing two female servants and a coachman. The 1901 census return for Devon, Plymstock, lists:

Vicarage House, Turnchapel

James J Tapson	*Head*	*Wid*^{r}	*76*	*Clergyman Church of England*	*Devon, Stoke Damerel*
Julia M A Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*21*		*France—British Subject*

again with a coachman and two female servants. Edith Emily was not included in the return.

(p 229) As a young man Alfred Henry had encountered financial problems. Referring to the Bankruptcy Amendment Act 1868, a notice in *The London Gazette* of 24 November 1868, page 6243, stated that *In the Matter of a Deed of Assignment, dated the 27th day of October, 1868, between Alfred Henry Tapson, of Newport, in the county of Monmouth, Shipbroker (debtor) and William Pugsley, of Newport, in the county of Monmouth, Merchant, John Davis, of Carmarthen, in the county of Carmarthen, Gentleman, and William Parsons, of Newport aforesaid, Sailmaker (trustee)* full details of the debtor's financial affairs had been left with the Chief Registrar of the Court of Bankruptcy on 21 November 1868. A further notice in the same issue of *The London Gazette*, page 6247, prints a *copy of an entry made in the book kept by the Chief Registrar of the Court of Bankruptcy*. This makes it clear that William Pugsley, John Davis and William Parsons were all trustees, and not creditors, to whom *the debtor assigns all his estate and effects, to be administered for the benefit of his creditors, as in bankruptcy, with a release to him.*

Ebsworthy James and James Octavius are missing from the 1891 census return for Christchurch, Newport, Monmouthshire:

Woodland Park					
Alfred H Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*49*	*Ship Broker*	*Monmouth, Newport*
Emily J Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*47*		*Cornwall, Polruan(?)*
Edward S R Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*27*	*Ship Broker*	*Monmouth, Newport*
Annie M Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*26*		*Monmouth, Newport*
Alfred S Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*21*		*Monmouth, Newport*
Alexander M Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*19*	*Articled Clerk*	*Monmouth, Newport*
Mabel Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*13*	*Scholar*	*Monmouth, Newport*
Muriel Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*11*	*Scholar*	*Monmouth, Newport*
Kittie Dian	*Visitor*	*Mar*	*26*		*London, Henley*
Dorothy Dian	*Visitor*		*4*		*Monmouth, Newport*

Kittie and Dorothy Dian at Christchurch in 1891 were clearly the wife and daughter of Albert Dean, whom Ebsworthy James was visiting at Monmouthshire, Newport, St. Woollos:

15 Clifton Place					
Albert Dean	*Head*	*Mar*	*28*	*Professor of Music*	*Bucks, High Wycombe*
Edward C Dean	*Son*		*5*	*Scholar*	*Hants, Brockenhurst*
Ebsworthy J Tapson	*Visitor*	*Un*	*16*	*Bankers Clerk*	*Mon, Newport*

together with one servant. And James Octavius is included in the return for Bristol, Westbury-on-Trym:

17 Redland Park, Private School					
James O Tapson	*Boarder*	*Un*	*15*	*Scholar*	*Mon, Newport*

(p 230) Alfred Staples Tapson and James Octavius Tapson also emigrated to South Africa. Alfred Staples died at Koffiefontein in the Orange Free State on 28 February 1897, aged 26 years; his death certificate, which stated that he was a bookkeeper and unmarried, was signed by *J.O. Tapson.* J.O. Tapson, identified as her brother, also signed Annie Maud's death certificate in 1923. These death certificates are in the Orange Free State Archives.* In his will, in the Cape Archives (Ref: 5075/46), James Octavius, who died a bachelor in South Africa, left the bulk of his estate, valued at £92,210, to his two surviving sisters, Winifred Mabel Morgan and Lulu Mildred Frost.*

Rachel was in Penarth for the 1891 census (*vide* page 231), but back with her eldest son, Alfred Henry, for the 1901 census for Monmouthshire, Newport:

Rougemont, Woodland Park					
Alfred H Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*59*	*Ship Broker*	*Mon, Newport*
Eliza Jane Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*57*		*Cornwall, Polruan(?)*
Annie Maud Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*35*		*Mon, Newport*
James O Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*25*	*Ship Broker*	*Mon, Newport*
Winifred Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*23*		*Mon, Newport*
Blanch M Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*22*		*Mon, Newport*
Louie M Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*9*		*Mon, Newport*
Rachael Tapson	*Mother*	*Wid*	*83*		*Mon, Newport*

together with one servant. James Octavius, who signed the death certificate for Alfred Staples in 1897, must have been on a visit to England in 1901.

Edward Sutton Ronschild, who should have given his age as 37, is listed in the 1901 return for Glamorganshire, St. John Baptist, Cardiff:

50 Richmond Road					
Edward S R Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*35*	*Steam Ship Owner's Manager*	*Mon, Newport*
Hilda M Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*28*	*Domestic Servant*	*Mon, Newport*
Alfred D Tapson	*Son*		*4*		*Glam, Cardiff*
Edward D Tapson	*Son*		*1*		*Glam, Cardiff*

plus one servant. Edward had married Hilda Moore Billingham in 1891, Q2 *(vide* page 230); the births were registered (Cardiff R.D.) of Alfred Denis in 1896, Q3, and Edward Douglas in 1899, Q4.

* Researched by Mrs. Elaine Rich (*vide* Addendum note for p 258)

In 1901 Alexander Malcolm was living in the same road as Edward:

29 Richmond Road

Alexander M Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*29*	*Solicitor*	*Mon, Newport*
Emily Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*28*		*Mon, Blaenavon*
Irene M Tapson	*Dau*		*7*		*London, Hampstead*

together with one servant. Alexander had married Emily Edwards in 1894, Q1 (*vide* page 230); the birth of Irene Marguerite had been registered (Hampstead R.D.) in 1894, Q1. Winifred Daisy, whose birth and death were registered (Hampstead R.D.) in 1896, Q3, was probably another daughter. Notices in three issues of *The London Gazette* of 1911 refer to an *Administration Order in the Case of a Deceased Debtor* named as *Tapson, Alexander Malcolm, Late 48, Queen-st, Cardiff, Solicitor, Died 28 January 1911*, the date of the Order being 2 May 1911.

Ebsworthy James is included in the 1901 census return for Monmouthshire, Caerwent:

Plough

Edward Knight	*Head*	*Mar*	*54*	*Farmer (Employer)*	*Mon, Caldicot*
Elizabeth Knight	*Wife*	*Mar*	*52*		*Mon, Caldicot*
Ellen M Knight	*Dau*	*Un*	*25*		*Mon, Caldicot*
Lucy A Knight	*Dau*	*Un*	*22*		*Mon, Caldicot*
Charles B Knight	*Son*	*Un*	*20*	*Farmer Son (Worker)*	*Mon, Caldicot*
Edward R Knight	*Son*	*Un*	*15*		*Mon, Caldicot*
Robert P Knight	*Son*	*Un*	*13*		*Mon, Caldicot*
Harold W Knight	*Son*	*Un*	*8*		*Mon, Caldicot*
Ebsworthy J Tapson	*Visitor*	*Un*	*26*	*Banker's Clerk*	*Mon, Newport*

plus a male and a female servant. Ebsworthy married Ellen Mary Knight in 1902, Q2 (*vide* page 230). Ebsworthy James Tapson died at Bristol in 1967, Q1, at the age of 92 years; his wife, Ellen Mary, had died at Bristol in 1958, Q4, aged 83.

(p 231) In 1891 Ethel Madeleine and Charles Ebsworthy were at home for the census (page 231). Constance Mary was staying at the home of George Darien, a mechanical engineer, and his wife, Annie, and is included in the return for Monmouthshire, Abergavenny:

14 Lion House, King Street

Constance Mary Tapson	*Visitor*	*Un*	*23*		*Mon, Newport*

and Dora May was visiting her sister Gertrude Marion at Glamorganshire, Whitchurch, Cardiff:

Addiscombe

Herbert W Jones	*Head*	*Mar*	*27*	*Printers Manager*	*Cardiff*
Gertrude M Jones	*Wife*	*Mar*	*21*		*Mon, Tredegar*
Dora M Tapson	*Visitor*	*Un*	*14*		*Mon, Tredegar*

(p 232) In 1901 Ebsworthy David James, his wife, Martha, and all their children were living in Glamorganshire; the return for the parish of Newcastle Lr, Bridgend, lists:

10 West Street

E J Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*58*	*Teacher Those Known As Brethren*	*Mon, Newport*
Martha Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*53*		*Mon, Pontypool*
Gertrude M Jones	*Dau*	*Wid*	*31*	*Living on own means*	*Mon, Tredegar*
Charles E Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*21*	*Miner Surveyor*	*Mon, Ruasth(?)*
Herbert T Jones	*GdSon*		*8*		*Glam, Llandaff*
John T Jones	*GdSon*		*4*		*Glam, Llandaff*

and one servant. The return for the parish of St. John Baptist, Cardiff, includes, at *24 Park Place*:

Constance Tapson	*Guest*	*Un*	*33*		*Mon, Newport*

the return for Daudy hamlet, Penybont, S. Glamorganshire, includes, at *West house*:

Ethel Tapson	*Visitor*	*Un*	*27*	*Companion*	*Mon, Tredegar*

and the return for the parish of St. Andrews includes, at *169 Elm Grove*:

Dora Tapson	*Visitor*	*Un*	*23*		*Mon, Tredegar*

Captain Herbert Tapson-Jones of the Fourth Welsh Brigade, Royal Field Artillery, elder son of Gertrude Marion and Herbert William Jones, was killed in action on Tuesday, 12 November 1918, aged 25. He had married Gladys D. Francis at Newport in 1917, Q3, and their daughter, Mary Tapson-Jones, was born at Newport in 1919, Q1. The body of Captain Herbert Tapson-Jones was brought home and buried in the Newport (St. Woollos) Cemetery. His widow remarried in 1931, Q4 (Holborn R.D.) and his daughter married in 1943, Q3 (Stroud R.D.). *John Tapson-Jones 17*, the younger son of Gertrude Marion and Herbert William, arrived at Portland, Maine, in the *Cymric* from Liverpool on 5 April 1914.‡

The death of *Eleanor Tapson 57*, Charles Ebsworthy's wife (page 231), was registered in Wales (Neath R.D.) in 1940, Q1; and the death of *Charles Ebsworthy Tapson 73* on 8 January 1953 is recorded at Salmon Arm on the Thompson river (in the Canadian Rockies, British Columbia). *Charles Ebsworthy Tapson 68* had arrived at Tacoma, near Seattle, on 1 Oct 1948 aboard the *Evria*,‡ (presumably through the Panama Canal, which was opened in Aug 1914). The 1995 and 1996 telephone directories for Salmon Arm list a *Jones, J Tapson 781 SE 2nd Ave Salmon Arm*, perhaps a homonymous descendant rather than the original John Tapson-Jones himself.

Dora May Tapson was included in a passenger list in 1926 for a voyage from London to the Cape.† A copy of the death certificate for Dora May Tapson, found in the Natal archives at Pietermaritzburg,* states that she died at Godalming, Surrey, on 24 March 1948, aged 71 years; the death certificate was signed by her nephew J.T. Jones (who must have returned to England). Dora May had been a District Superintendent in South Africa of the Y.W.C.A. A few months before the death of Dora May her sister Ethel Madeleine, who also did not marry, had died, aged 74 years, presumably also at Godalming, since both deaths were registered in the Surrey S.W. District.

(p 232) John Robert W. Tapson and all his children were in Lancashire at the time of the 1901 census, but there is no sign of his second wife in the return for the parish of Pendleton:

70 Harmsworth Street

John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*53*	*Stationery Engine Driver*	*Mon, Newport*
Rachael Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*24*		*Anglesea, Holyhead*
Catherine Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*22*	*Dressmaker's Asst*	*Anglesea, Holyhead*
Gladys Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*16*	*Tobacconist's Asst*	*Anglesea, Holyhead*

His son Robert, who had married Grace Griffith in 1898, Q4, was also living in Pendleton:

30 Alder Street

Robert Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*27*	*Railway Clerk*	*Anglesey, Holyhead*
Grace Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*29*		*Anglesey, Holyhead*
Owen J Griffith	*Nephew*		*6*		*Anglesey, Holyhead*

and his daughter Mary Ann Emily was working in the Borough of Manchester, Sth. Manchester:

29 Rumford Street

Mary Emily Tapson	*Servant*	*Un*	*19*	*General Servant (Domestic)*	*Holyhead*

(p 236) The William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, has published on its website *http://www.clements.umich.edu/Webguides/T/Tapson.html* an abstract of a journal kept by John Tapson whilst serving as Captain's Clerk and as Purser in the Royal Navy. The journal, running to 211 pages, was written between 25 April 1806 and 28 December 1814. John Tapson received his first warrant as a Purser on 30 January 1808 (*vide* page 236), the month in which, according to these notes, he was transferred to H.M.S *Cyane* as Captain's Clerk (though it may be that he served aboard that ship as Acting Purser). During the period between his service on H.M.S. *Cyane* and his appointment as Purser to H.M.S. *Africaine* John married Ann Kelly.

The following appears on the website:

* Researched by Mrs. Elaine Rich

† *www.nationalarchives.gov.uk* Outward Passenger List 1890-1939 (images unavailable)

‡ *www.ancestry.com* (image viewed)

Background note As Captain's Clerk aboard the H.M.S. *Defiance* and *Cyane,* and as purser aboard the *Africaine*, John Tapson was witness to several significant naval engagements during the Napoleonic Wars. Boarding the 74 gun frigate *Defiance* in April 1806, Tapson served uneventfully off the coasts of Brittany, Portugal and Spain until January 1808, when he was transferred to the *Cyane*.

Passing through the Straits of Gibraltar in February, the *Cyane* took part in patrolling the Spanish and French coasts, intercepting vessels carrying contraband or goods to the enemy and making occasional landings to engage French ground forces. Interactions between the ship and shore, taking place at something of a distance, were not always as fraught with peril as might be supposed, and sometimes descended to the ridiculous. The day after being driven from Calella, Catalonia, on August 14, 1808, for instance, French troops returned to greet the crew of the *Cyane* with light arms and insults. For Tapson, the most striking insult was delivered by a daring French cavalry officer, who exhibited "a singular display of personal daring, and contempt of danger; for he walked deliberately down to the water's edge with his arms folded over his chest, then turned his Back towards the Ship, and with the utmost 'Sang Froid' threw the skirt of his Coat over his head, stooped forward & slapped his Hands on a certain part (which is sometimes called the seat of honor) and with all the contempt & scorn of our power it was possible by such means to convey" (p. 36). Captain Staines of the *Cyane* took the insult personally on behalf of all of the sailors, and assuming personal command of a twelve pounder, exchanged shots with the Frenchman. Frightened, but undaunted, the French officer saw fit "to continue his indecent exhibition with redoubled energy" until on the third shot, the Captain's aim proved true. Tapson was repelled by the brutality of the Spanish troops, much as he was critical of their inefficacy compared to the French. Of a like mind, Captain Staines ordered his men ashore to rally the Spaniards, and to assist in driving off the French rifles. Clearly more comfortable at sea than on land, Staines quickly withdrew, narrowly avoiding capture.

In May 1809 the *Cyane* proceeded to the Bay of Naples, landing at Monte Cecilia to capture a pair of ill-equipped, lightly defended martello towers, and remaining in the region for over two months, intercepting shipping and interrupting land operations whenever possible. In one particularly violent clash with Neapolitan ships during the summer, the *Cyane* lost 3 men, 27 injured. Among the injured was Capt. Staines, whose arm was shattered by grape shot. He withstood the pain well, according to Tapson, even requesting while his arm was being amputated that the ring on the little finger be carefully preserved.

In October 1809 the *Cyane* returned to England. Tapson awaited his next appointment until June 1810, when he was made purser to the H.M.S. *Africaine,* captained by the sadistic Robert Corbet. Less than three weeks after joining the *Africaine*, Tapson recorded that "A most violent prejudice has arisen in the minds of the Ship's Company against the appointment of Capt. Corbet" (p. 65) due to his "oppressive & tyrannical" treatment of previous crews. A near mutiny averted by the intervention of Sir George Coburn, Corbet's arrival aboard ship was nevertheless greeted with a sullen response by the crew, who let it be known that they had little intention of submitting easily to Corbet's harsh discipline. Indicative of their state of mind, the sulking crew refused to hold the shellbacks ceremony on crossing the equator, and a short while later, the arrest of a marine for insubordination prompted one anonymous member of the crew to send a death threat to the Captain. As inept in reading his crew as he was harsh, Corbet ordered his officers to arm themselves, confronted the crew and read the letter to all, insisting that "it was his fixed determination to be a great deal more severe than he had ever yet been," sentencing the offending marine to eight dozen lashes as a demonstration of his intentions, taunting the crew in the process (p. 69-70). According to Tapson, Corbet's bullying found its mark: "If the People had before this entertained any doubts of the Nerve & determined character of their Captain, they must now no doubt have been undeceived" (p. 71).

Arming the watch to ensure that no mutinous attempts would be tried, the *Africaine* passed the Cape of Good Hope on August 19th, and in September touched at the Island of Rodriguez before joining in the naval assault of Grand Port, Mauritius. The *Africaine* parried with French warships off the coast until the 13th, when, against the advice of his Lieut. Tullidge, Corbet ordered his ship to press forward without support. After becoming embroiled in a fierce battle, the *Africaine* was laid out helpless when the wind died to a calm, and was subjected to a withering fire that disabled or unmanned most of her guns. Tullidge and the remaining officers reluctantly ordered the colors to be stricken, but, enraging the crew, Corbet shouted "For shame, hoist the colors again, fight and go down!" Tullidge pleaded with the Captain, insisting that the damage done had already been too great, and the ship was turned over to the French. Knowing no French, Corbet at last ordered Tapson to interpret in the negotiations, and after some ungentlemanly treatment by a Republican seaman, the crew of the *Africaine* were taken aboard the French ship, *Iphigenie*. At dawn, the English frigate *Boadicea* was spotted bearing down under heavy sail, and it was able to retake the unmasted *Africaine*, though it made no attempt to rescue its crew after seeing how badly mangled they must be. In this, the captain of *Boadicea* was accurate: the *Africaine* had suffered a loss of 49 dead and 114 wounded — more than half the crew.

The officers of the *Africaine* were placed into a prison ship at Port Louis while the enlisted were billeted ashore. Within a few days, the prisoners were liberated by the British landing force that had captured Grand Port. To the relief of the crew, they learned that Corbet had died of wounds received, who had apparently killed himself by removing a tourniquet and bleeding to death, rather than submit to the humiliation of capture. Aboard a captured frigate *Astr..e*, Tapson returned to England, arriving in April, The officers were subsequently fully exonerated at court martial for their part in the capture of the *Africaine*.

In August 1811 Tapson rejoined the *Africaine* for a tour in the South Seas. Making a circuitous route from Sri Lanka to India and Indonesia, then back to India, the *Africaine* arrived in Bombay on January 1, 1813, just in time to receive word that war had been declared between the United States and Britain. The *Africaine* was immediately charged with intercepting a small fleet of American merchantmen (valued at £300,000 each) from Canton and set sail once again for the East Indies. Meeting the *Minden* in Madras, the *Africaine* laid in wait for the American ships in the Straits of Malacca, but found nothing. In January 1812, after several months of duty off Sumatra and Malaysia, they were ordered to the Euphrates River to suppress piracy, but when they again found little to do, they returned to Indonesia, going as far east as the Moluccas (Maluku), the Celebes (Sulawesi), Banda and Timor before pulling into port in the Phillipines just before Christmas 1814.

Scope and contents The journal of Captain's Clerk and Purser, John Tapson, is an outstanding record of a junior officer's service in the Royal Navy during the Napoleonic War. Probably a copy made in later years, perhaps with some embellishments, the journal is a highly literate, occasionally witty journey throught the Napoleonic naval war, providing a view of life aboard a Royal Navy ship that may be slightly sanitized, but nevertheless very revealing. There are particularly important descriptions of the near mutiny of the frigate *Africaine*, the operations along the Spanish coast during the late summer 1808, and the Neapolitan coast in the late spring 1809, and of the capture and rescue of the crew of the *Africaine* in Mauritius in the fall 1810.

Though they are less dramatic, Tapson's journal entries from August 1811 through December 1814 are no less valuable. Cruising the waters of Sri Lanka, India and Indonesia, with a side journey to Iraq, Tapson includes some excellent descriptions of English and Dutch colonial outposts in South Asia and the East Indies. A calm air of British superiority and authority over native and rival colonial powers alike exudes from Tapson's descriptions of Ceylon and Madras, and particularly in his depictions of interactions with the Portugese, Dutch and natives in the eastern Indonesian islands. **Provenance** Purchased, 1997

(p 236) The Prison Commission's *Old Bailey Sessions Papers* (PRO PCOM1/20) report a trial held on 3 June 1824, which throws light on James Martin Tapson's business activities after he moved to London. The defendant, George Wilson, was indicted on a charge of *stealing, on the 24th of April, six pairs of stockings, value 35s., the goods of John Davenport and James Martin Tapson*. It was stated that the prisoner, in the company of another man, had stolen the stockings at Aldgate from a delivery truck, but was apprehended by an alert police officer, Daniel Forrester, who saw the prisoner with a parcel, which he did not have earlier, in his hand. James Martin, giving evidence, stated that he was *in partnership with John Davenport*. The truck driver, Michael Heymer, explained that he was *employed occasionally at the prosecutors' warehouse, which is in King's Arms Yard, Coleman-street*. George Wilson, aged 19, was found guilty and sentenced to six months' confinement in prison.

A manuscript (Add Mss 36471) found in the West Sussex Record Office is concerned with *Miscellaneous bills presented to William Ayling of West-street, Midhurst, Woollen and Linen Draper*; it refers to *14 bills from Hill, Davenport and Tapson of London, Wholesalers, 1830 - 1836*. Possibly Hill became a partner after the death, about 1826, of James Martin. James Martin's brother Joseph, a wine merchant, also had his business in Coleman Street at that time (*vide* page 255).

(p 239) The following appeared in *The London Gazette* of Tuesday, 14 August 1855, page 3096:

Notice is hereby given, that the Partnership heretofore subsisting between us the undersigned, William Tapson and William Henry Tapson, carrying on business at Saint German's, in the county of Cornwall, as General Merchants, under the firm of William Tapson and Son, was, on the 30th day of June last, dissolved by mutual consent.
— Dated this 9th day of August, 1855.

William Tapson
William Henry Tapson

(p 242) The following appeared in *The London Gazette* of 6 July 1858, page 1858:

Notice is hereby given, that the Partnership heretofore subsisting between us the undersigned, William Henry Tapson and George Welch, carrying on business at Saint Germans, in the county of Cornwall, as General Merchants, under the firm of William Henry Tapson and Company, was, on the 24th day of June last, dissolved by mutual consent.
— Dated this 3rd day of July, 1858.

William Henry Tapson
George Welch

The following 1861 census return for Cornwall, Saltash:

Fore Street

William H Tapson	*Lodger*	*Mar*	*39*	*Commercial Traveller*	*Cornwall, St Germans*
Jenny Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*35*	*Wife of Commercial Traveller*	*Cornwall, Landrake*

shows that William has a new occupation and seems to be no longer involved with the family business, which may have been wound up or may have passed into the hands of George Welch on 3 July 1858.

Passenger Lists at the National Archives of Canada, Ottawa, contain, on microfilm reel #C4522, page 2, item #35:

Travelling on the 'Margaret Ann' to Quebec, North America, departing date 10 Apr 1867, arriving 2 (or *7* ?) *June 1867, embarking at Plymouth: TAPSON Wm. H., born England; TAPSON Mrs. No final destination given.*

In the 1881 census return for *Ste. Mary's Ward, Montreal, Quebec*, Household No. 475, William Henry's age should have been recorded as 58 or 59:

	MARITAL STATUS	ETHNIC ORIGIN	AGE	BIRTHPLACE	OCCUPATION	RELIGION
W^m^ Tapson	*Married*	*English*	*55*	*Angleterre*	*Agent General*	*Episcopal*
Jane Tapson	*Married*	*English*	*51*	*Angleterre*		*Episcopal*

An indication of William Henry's activities in Montreal is given by microfiche copies of two booklets in the Department of Rare Books at the British Library (Mic. F. 232). The first is titled:

MONTREAL 1880
Its Commercial and public institutions, its places of interest and complete street directory, how and where to find them. Compiled and alphabetically arranged by W.H. Tapson

Only seven pages survive; his office address is given as *163 St. James Street*. The second is titled:

The Authorised Official Catalogue of the GRAND DOMINION EXHIBITION
MONTREAL 1880 Sep 14th — Sep 24th $20,000 in Prizes
Guide to the City, Places of Interest, Official Programme of Sports, Games, Civic Demonstrations, &c.
Published by W.H. TAPSON & Co, 456 NOTRE DAME STREET, MONTREAL

On page 51 appears the advertisement:

W.H. TAPSON & Co.
ADVERTISING, INSURANCE And General Commission Agents
456 Notre Dame St., Montreal
W.H. TAPSON D. STEVENSON

William Henry and his wife, Jenny, have not been found in the 1901 census for England and Wales, though soon afterwards their deaths were registered in England and they were buried at Landrake.

(p 242) A further entry in the Passenger Lists, on microfilm reel #C4528, page 3, item#87, reads:

Travelling on the 'Thames' to Quebec & Montreal, departing 23 Sep 1873, arriving 9 Oct 1873, embarking at Plymouth: TAPSON, Jas, single, age 40, Gentleman, born Britain. No final destination given.

So it seems that James Tapson followed his brother to Canada six years later, towards the end of the last year for which records have been found for him in England (in both St. Germans and Devonport); however, James Tapson of St. Germans would have been 48 years old at the time. And it would seem to be this James listed in the 1881 census for *Prescott, Grenville South, Ontario*:

Mary O'Neal	*Widow*	*Irish*	*37*	*Ireland*	*Plain Sewing*	*Catholic*
Andrew P O'Neal	*Single*	*Irish*	*13*	*Ontario*	*Printer*	*Catholic*
Mary A O'Neal	*Single*	*Irish*	*10*	*Ontario*		*Catholic*
James Tapson	*Single*	*English*	*51*	*England*	*R.R. Clerk*	*C of E*

That the James Tapson of this census was still single strongly suggests that he was James Tapson of St. Germans, although he would have been 55 at the time of the census.

(p 245) The 1901 census return for London, Greenwich lists:

32 Vanburgh Road

John Tapson	*Head*	*Widr*	*85*	*Retired M D*	*Devon, Tainback*
Frances E Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*55*		*London, Clapham*
Marion Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*54*		*London, Clapham*

together with two servants. *Tainback* is obviously *Tavistock*.

(p 248) All William John's surviving children were at home for the 1891 census at Kent, Lewisham:

Howson Road

William J Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*47*	*Stock Broker Agent*	*Surrey, Clapham*
Annie Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*47*		*Surrey, Newington*
Ernest J Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*21*	*Merchants Clerk*	*Surrey, Penge*
Horace W Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*1*	*Merchants Clerk*	*Surrey, Croydon*
Annie H M Tapson	*Dau*		*13*		*Surrey, Croydon*
Harold P Tapson	*Son*		*3*		*Kent, Brockley*

Two children of William John were at home for the 1901 census for Kent, Farningham:

13 West Kew

William J Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*57*	*Retired Stock Broker*	*Clapham*
Annie Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*57*		*London, Newington*
Annie H Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*23*		*Surrey, Cr*
Harold P Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*13*		*Kent, Brockley*

William John's other surviving child by his second marriage was living in Kent, Maidstone:

Egerton Villa, St Lukes Road

Horace W Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*25*	*Commercial Traveller*	*Surrey, Croydon*
Rose B Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*27*		*Kent, Woolwich*

plus one servant; and his only surviving child by his first marriage was living in Essex, Leyton:

8 Morley Villas

Ernest John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*31*	*Coal Merchant's Clerk*	*London, Penge*
Florence L M Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*23*		*London, Peckham*
Charles Ern Tapson	*Son*		*3*		*London, Upper Norwood*

Charles Ernest was born on 21 Oct 1897. Horace William and Rose Beatrice, née Lee, had two children: Elsey Nellie, born (Maidstone R.D.) in 1901, Q3, and Henry William, born (Bromley R.D.) in 1903, Q2. Rose left Horace and emigrated to New Zealand in 1914; on the voyage from London to Wellington are listed *R.B. Tapson 42*, *H.W. Tapson 11*; *Elsie Tapson* is listed for 1910, perhaps an indexing error.‡

(p 249) The 1841 census return for Cornwall, St Stephen by Saltash, shows that Joseph Alfred was one of the pupils at a boarding school, though his age should have been recorded as 13 (*vide* p 239):

Fore Street

Joseph Tapson	*15-19*	*Pupil*	*Born in Cornwall*

A notice in *The London Gazette* of 21 January 1868, page 299, confirms that the two brothers were also business partners:

> *Notice is hereby given, that the Partnership heretofore existing between us the undersigned, John Tapson and Joseph Alfred Tapson, carrying on the profession or business of General Practitioners in Medicine and Surgery, at Clapham, in the County of Surrey, was dissolved by mutual consent, on the 31st day of December last, and that the undersigned Joseph Alfred Tapson will continue to carry on the same profession or business, and pay and receive all debts due and owing by and to the said Partnership. — Dated this 17th day of January, 1868.*
>
> *John Tapson*
>
> *Joseph Alfred Tapson*

It is clear that the partnership was brought to an end due to John's retirement (page 244).

(p 250) Herbert Francis was the *Mr H.F. Tapson 30* who arrived in Australia on the *Garonne* in April 1885,† (*vide* page 252); and by 1891 Cecil Octavius had emigrated to California (*vide* pages 252 and 400). But Frederick Ernest William was included in the 1891 census return for Surrey, Lambeth:

20 Sandmere Road

Frederick E Wm Tapson	*Lodger*	*Un*	*25*	*Bankers Clerk*	*Surrey, Clapham*

In 1891 Joseph Alfred's daughter Evelyn Mary was included in the household of her brother-in-law Richard Edward Norton in the census return for Surrey, Wandsworth:

6 Dalebury Road

Richard E Norton	*Head*	*Mar*	*36*	*Brewers Collector*	*Middlesex, St. Pancras*
Ernest L Norton	*Son*		*7*		*Surrey, Balham*
Frank Hr Norton	*Son*		*6*		*Surrey, Balham*
Evelyn Tapson	*Sister-in-law*	*Un*	*36*		*Surrey, Clapham*

plus two servants. And Ida Josephine Norton was visiting her sister's family at Sussex, Claydon:

St Aubyns

Robert ETP Haselfoot	*Head*	*Mar*	*26*	*Living on own means*	*Sussex, Portslade*
Agnes C Haselfoot	*Wife*	*Mar*	*28*		*Surrey, Clapham*
Elsie C Haselfoot	*Dau*		*3*		*Sussex, Hassocks*
Ivy Haselfoot	*Dau*		*6M*		*Sussex, Hassocks*
FGEP Haselfoot	*Visitor*	*Un*	*27*	*Living on own means*	*M'sex, Walworth*
Ida J Norton	*Visitor*	*Mar*	*32*	*Living on own means*	*Surrey, Clapham*

together with four servants.

† *www.access.prov.vic.gov.au/public* Index of Unassisted Immigration to Victoria, 1852-1923 (image unavailable)

‡ *www.nationalarchives.gov.uk* Outward Passenger List 1890-1939 (images not viewed)

In 1891 Grace Emma was visiting her uncle Thomas Lingham at Essex, Fordham:

Main Road, The Rectory

Thomas L Lingham	*Head*	*Widr*	*62*	*Rector of Fordham, Essex*	*Surrey, Camberwell*
Grace E Tapson	*Niece*	*Un*	*34*		*London, Clapham*
Edith E Lingham	*Dau*	*Un*	*29*		*Herts, Hertingfordbury*
Charles D Lingham	*Son*	*Un*	*26*	*Retired clerk & accountant*	*Herts, Hertingfordbury*
Alice M H Lingham	*Dau*	*Un*	*24*		*Herts, Hertingfordbury*
Nellie Lingham	*Dau*	*Un*	*14*		*Essex, Fordham*

together with two servants.

The 1901 return for London, Lambeth, lists three children of Joseph Alfred:

10 Benedict Road

Frederick Tapson	*Head*	*Un*	*35*	*Clerk Agents*	*London, Clapham*
Evelyn Tapson	*Sister*	*Un*	*46*		*London, Clapham*
Grace Tapson	*Sister*	*Un*	*44*		*London, Clapham*

(p 252) Francis Amelia, wife of Frederic Ernest William Tapson, died on 12 October 1936 at Down View, Summerdown Road, Eastbourne; she was 74 years old. The executors of her will were her husband (a bank official) and Beatrice Maud Ripley (wife of Philip Otway Ripley), and her estate was valued at £12,375 - 17 - 9. Frederic Ernest William died in 1948, Q1 (Eastbourne R.D.) aged 82.

Cecil Octavius is listed in the 1910 US Federal Census return for *Santa Barbara, California*:

William H Flint	*57*	*Maine*	*Head*	*Mar*	*Physician (General Practice)*
Cecil Tapson	*43*	*England*	*Roomer*	*Single*	*Assistant in Physician's Office*
					Immigration year: 1888

and at the time of the 1920 US Federal Census he is living at *Montecito, Santa Barbara*:

Nathaniel Bruch	*32*	*Philadelphia*	*Head*	*Single*	*Doctor (Private Family)*
Stanley R McCormick	*45*	*Illinois*	*Patient*	*Single*	*None*
Cecil O Tapson	*53*	*England*	*Employee*	*Single*	*Secretary (Private Family)*
					Immigration year: 1887
Gin-Gin	*56*	*China*	*Servant*	*Single*	*Cook (Private Family)*
Gin-Sue	*56*	*China*	*Servant*	*Single*	*Waiter (Private Family)*

It is not immediately clear whether Cecil Octavius is working for the doctor or whether he (and even the doctor himself and the two Chinamen) is working for some other employer. The 1930 return for *Montecito* may throw some light on the situation:

Raymond H Putnam	*40*	*Nebraska*	*Head*	*Married*	*Chauffeur (Private Family)*
.....					
Cecil O Tapson	*63*	*England*	*Servant*	*Single*	*Secretary (Private Estate)*

together with the members of Raymond Putnam's family and six other *servants* all employed by a *Private Family* (a *Dietician*, a *Homeboy*, a *Graduate Nurse*, a *Kitchen Help*, a *Trained Nurse*, and one whose occupation is illegible). The *Private Estate* referred to here is perhaps that for which Cecil Octavius has been working since 1913 (*vide* page 252) and for which other housemates in 1920 and 1930 may also have been working. Cecil Octavius has not been found in the returns for 1890 or 1900, during which period he may have been ranching and running his cinnabar mine.

(p 253) The following entry appears in the 1891 census return for Devon, Sidmouth:

Station Road, Belgrave House

Robert Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*61*	*Vicar of All Saints, Sidmouth*	*Cornwall, St Germans*
Emily C Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*64*		*Kent, Woolwich*
Christiana Cox	*Sister-in-law*	*Un*	*61*	*Living on own means*	*Kent, Woolwich*

and the 1901 census return for Somerset, Clevedon, includes, along with three servants:

St Andrews

Robert Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*71*	*Clergyman Church of England*	*Cornwall, St. Germans*
Emily C Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*74*		*Kent, Woolwich*
Christiana Cox	*Sister-in-law*	*Un*	*71*		*Kent, Woolwich*

(p 258) Mrs Elaine Rich of Zimbabwe, a descendant of James Tapson, relates the story, possibly fictional, passed down in that branch of the family that in 1841 James and a brother (who could only have been Alfred Joseph) were sent on a voyage to see the world, allegedly to prevent James entering into an unsuitable marriage, from which they returned in 1842. (During that time both their mother and their brother William Henry had died.) Their voyage had taken them to the Cape, and perhaps it was this visit that later gave James the idea of emigrating to South Africa: for in 1863 he and his family arrived at East London in British Kaffraria (subsequently part of Cape Province) having hired, it is said, a 300-ton sailing-vessel to transport them together with their farming equipment and necessary supplies. The Cape Parliament had recently voted large sums of money to encourage immigration, and the British Government particularly wished to establish a settlement of immigrants in British Kaffraria, so it seems likely that James received good financial inducements to emigrate.

East London, situated at the mouth of the Buffalo River, was then a sprawling seaport and military garrison; James and his family settled in the newly-established village of Panmure (now part of East London), and on 10 April 1867 James was appointed to the Committee of Managers of the then recently-founded Panmure Public School. [In 1872 two of James's nieces, Emily Tapson and Ethel Septima Tapson, two daughters of Alfred Joseph (page 259), were appointed First and Second Assistant Mistresses at the school, at an annual salary, in 1876, of £125. James's daughter, Mary, was taught by her cousin Ethel Septima, who eventually returned to England, where she was listed in the 1891 census return. Emily married a Civil Engineer, George Blyth Cuthbert, in St. John's Church, East London, on 20 June 1882, one of the witnesses at the marriage being her sister Ethel Tapson. Emily's death on 7 December 1934 is recorded in the Cape Archives (Ref: 6/9/4527 44129).] On 20 May 1869 James purchased a large plot of farmland, which in 1881 was divided into building lots. Elaine writes: *It is rumoured that James was a bit of a womaniser and a boozer and used to sell off pieces of his land to raise sufficient funds to pay for periodic trips across to England*. James died in March 1884, aged 66 years; his widow, Elizabeth, died on 23 October 1892, aged 73, in East London.

James Alfred, the eldest son of James and Elizabeth, born at Heathfield on 9 October 1851, became a farmer after leaving the Police Force subsequent to the border wars of Kaffraria He married Mary Jane Wilson at East London on 28 March 1877; they had ten sons and three daughters, of whom one son and one daughter died in infancy. James Alfred moved to Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) in 1908 to farm in Rusape; here, much like his father before him, he partook in various activities that contributed to the development of the community. Mary Jane, who did not accompany her husband to Southern Rhodesia in 1908, finally joined him there eight years later, but died within two days of her arrival in Rusape; her death at the age of 60, on 18 August 1916, was due to *degeneration of the heart*. James Alfred died on his farm, *Dyffryn*, on 28 February 1933 from *heart failure*; he was 81 years old.

William Henry, the second son of James and Elizabeth, born on 2 October 1856 at Goudhurst, earned his living both as a transport rider and as a farmer. He was an extremely tall man (6 ft 4½ in) and somewhere along the line lost an eye, allegedly poked out by an ox; thereafter he had a glass eye. He married Emily Thompson on 9 August 1877 at Komga, near East London, by whom he had five boys (one of whom died in infancy) and three girls. William Henry died in East London on 4 January 1940, aged 83 years; his widow, Emily, died at the age of 97 on 21 January 1956 at Randfontein, Transvaal.

Albert Joseph, the third son of James and Elizabeth, born on 3 March 1858 at Goudhurst, became involved in mercantile business and eventually, once retired, devoted himself to farming. He married Beatrice Mary Treasure at Port Alfred, down the coast from East London, sometime between 1906 and 1921; they had no children. Joseph Albert, as he seems to have been known, died from *coronary thrombosis* in East London on 23 November 1944, aged 86; his widow died at East London from *complications of a fractured hip* on 7 January 1960, aged 79.

Mary Elizabeth, the last child of James and Elizabeth, born on 26 March 1862 at Goudhurst, married twice, but had no children. She died, aged 84, at East London on 5 October 1946.

(p 259) In the 1841 census return for Islington, Finsbury, the household at *Hemmingford Terrace* of *Edw^{d} Crick, Watch Maker* includes:

Alfred Jos^{h} Tapson	*20-24*	*Cl*	*Not born in Middlesex*

(p 262) The 1901 census return for Middlesex, Hillingdon East, includes Alfred Joseph and two of his three unmarried daughters, together with a gardener and two female servants:

Heath Lodge					
Alfred J Tapson	*Head*	*Wid^{r}*	*81*	*Retired Doctor Medical*	*London S*
Edith Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*49*		*London W*
Ethel S Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*47*		*London W*

On 8 October 1913 Anna Maria arrived at Seattle from Yokohama, Japan, on the *Awa Maru*; the passenger list describes her as *Minna Tapson, 54 yr 8 mth, Missionery, Single, born in England*, gives her last permanent address as *Uozaki, Japan*, her next of kin as *Mrs Helps, Coleshill, Bucks, England*, and her final destination as *England*.* Anna Maria is named as Minna in Alfred Joseph's will (page 263). She had sailed from Southampton to Yokohama in 1903, when she was described in the passenger list as *A.M. Tapson Female*.† It is not known if this was her first voyage to Japan. After her holiday in England she returned to Yokohama in 1914; this time she was described as *M. Tapson 55 Female*.† And on 6 November 1914 the *Shid Zuoka Maru*, which sailed from Yokohama on 21 October 1914, arrived at Seattle; among its passengers were:

Hind James	*53yr 6 mth*	*Clerk in Holy Orders*
Hind Anne Theodsia	*50 yr 11 mth*	*Wife*

last address *Japan, Koturality*, final destination *Santa Monica, California*.*

(p 267) Thomas Robert Hanns emigrated to the state of South Australia. He was married at the Wesleyan Chapel, Strathalbyn, near Adelaide:

29 Nov 1861	***Thomas Robert Hanns Tapson***	*35*	*N*	*Father: John Tapson*
	Lydia Pearce	*21*	*N*	*Father: William Pearce*

Thomas would have been 40 years old; he had already taken one year off his age in the 1851 census. The births followed of Bertha (11 Sep 1862), Lydia (27 Sep 1864), Arthur (27 Dec !866), Florence Eva (1 Oct 1871) and Eva (28 Mar 1874).°

A list in the State Records of New South Wales of passengers aboard the *Emma*, which left Adelaide on 4 March 1856 and arrived at Sydney on 1 April 1856, includes as a cabin passenger *T. Tapson*;‡ the *Emma* was a 121-ton brig of Sydney. *Mr Tapson* was then listed as a passenger on the *William Denny*, which arrived at Auckland from Sydney on 24 April, 1856;+ the *William Denny* was a 432-ton screw-steamship of Sydney which ran a monthly service between Sydney and Auckland. *Mr Tapson*, a cabin passenger who sailed from Auckland on the *William Denny* arriving at Sydney on 12 June 1856,‡ was presumably Thomas Robert Hanns beginning his return voyage to Adelaide. The death is recorded of *Thomas Tapson of Adelaide on 21 September 1876 at Genelong*; his age was given as 45, but he would have been 55. His surviving relative is named as N. J. Pearce, presumably a relative of his wife and his nearest male relative.°

The only son of of Thomas and Lydia was married at St. Luke's Church, Adelaide:

5 Oct 1891	***Arthur Tapson***	*24*	*Single*	*Father: Thomas Hanns Linington Tapson*
	Helen Alice Maud Schell	*20*	*Single*	*Father: Henry Schell*

The births were then recorded of Linington Vigus (9 July 1892) and Alfred Armitage (27 Feb 1894).°

Lydia Tapson, 74, of Parkside, South Australia, died on 13 October 1915; her nearest relative was named as V. Lynington Tapson (her grandson).° Linington Vigus Tapson, Private 7565, *5th Battalion, Australian Infantry, A.I.F.* was killed in action at the Somme on Friday 23 August 1918; his age was given as 26; he was described as the *son of Eleanor Alice Maud and the late A. Tapson, born in South Australia.*

* *www.ancestry.com* Seattle Passenger Lists (images viewed)

† *www.nationalarchives.gov.uk* Outward Passenger List 1890-1939 (images not viewed)

° Births, marriages and deaths in South Australia researched by Julia Parker, a descendant of Robert Henry Tapson (page 337)

‡ *www.records.nsw.gov.au* (images viewed) +Auckland Maritime Museum, *www.nzmaritime.org.nz*

(p 266) Very little is known about William, the youngest son of Nicholas and Patience, but he is mentioned in the will, dated 27 August 1829, of his uncle Richard Ball of the Parish of Sourton: *I give and bequeath unto William Tapson, son of my sister Patience Tapson, the sum of twenty pounds.* So William was still alive in 1829. Richard Ball died on 2 February 1830 and his will was sworn ten days later. It may have been this William who was included in the 1851 census return for Bickleigh (Appendix III): he had been baptized at Tavistock, given in the census return as the place of birth, though his age would have been 55 (not 40 as given). And the burial at nearby Plympton St. Mary:

22 Apr 1860 William Tapson Union Workhouse 52

may also be that of this same William, though his age then would have been 65. Ages given for lodgers (as in the census return) and for Workhouse inmates (as in the burial entry) are notoriously unreliable. However, see the following Addendum note for page 315.

(p 268) In 1901 George's widow, Sarah, was still in London, Streatham:

Sarah Tapson	*Head*	*Wid*	*77*	*London, Holloway*
Hannah Tapson	*Dau*	*Wid*	*55*	*London, Holloway*

On Hannah's birth certificate her father is named as *George Francis Tapson*; this confirms that George Tapson of Islington has been correctly identified as the son of John Tapson of Tavistock.*

(p 270) The entry for 10 Sep 1806 in the marriage register of the parish church of Cheriton Bishop (between Okehampton and Exeter), in which the groom and bride are named as *Ebsworth Tapson* and *Amma Oldridge*, probably refers to the marriage of Ebsworthy and Amy; Ebsworthy had been conveying baggage along that road in 1805 and he did not renew his publican's licence in 1806.

(p 271) That it was John's wife who died in 1859, Q4, is confirmed by the 1861 census return for St. Paul, Deptford; John is listed at *18 Francis Street North* in the household of *Francis Williams*:

John Tapson	*Boarder*	*Widr*	*44*	*Baker*	*Somerset, Ilminster*

(p 272) James was back in Honiton at the time of the 1841 census return for that town, which shows him in the High Street in the household of Luther Elliott:

James Tapson	*30-34*	*Servant*	*Born in Devonshire*

In the 1901 census return for Exeter James's widow, Eliza Jane (née Blight), is shown living alone:

6 Codrington Street

Eliza J Tapson	*Head*	*Wid*	*71*	*Cornwall, Padstow*

(p 274) The 1901 census return for Surrey, Beddington, includes:

Llanberis Road

Thomas Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*77*	*Retired Bank Cashier*	*Somerset, Ilminster*
Sarah Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*62*		*Berks, Reading*
Alice G Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*36*		*Surrey, Peckham*
Frank H Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*35*	*Life Insurance Clerk*	*Surrey, Peckham*
Harry K Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*30*	*Bank Clerk*	*Surrey, Peckham*

together with one servant. Thomas Ebsworthy is listed with his family in the return for Surrey, Lambeth:

17 Hamthorpe Road

Thomas E Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*37*	*Bank Clerk*	*Surrey, Peckham*
Florence E Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*37*		*Surrey, Streatham*
Cyril E T Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*7*		*Kent, Catford*
Frank A S Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*5*		*Surrey, Norwood*

The births of Cyril Ebsworthy and Frank Arthur S. were registered in 1893, Q3 (Lewisham R.D.) and 1895, Q4 (Lambeth R.D.) respectively. Frederick Albert appears in the return for London, Lewisham:

Holsworthy, Bromley Road

Frederick A Tapson	*Boarder*	*Un*	*32*	*Bankers Clerk*	*London, Peckham*

The death of Alice Gertrude, who did not marry, was registered in 1944, Q1 (Exeter R.D.), her age being correctly recorded as 79.

* Information from Hannah's granddaughter, June Heath

Dr. Roger Ridley-Smith of Wellington, New Zealand, grandson of Frederick Albert, says that Frederick Albert, allegedly in trouble with the police because of defalcations at his place of work, emigrated to Pietermaritzberg in the Natal Province of South Africa, where he claimed to have married Ethel Lizzie Hinton (née Morton) who had left her husband and their five or six children in Cape Town. Frederick Albert and Ethel Lizzie, whose relationship was probably bigamous, moved to New Zealand, where their daughter, Maudie Kingston Tapson, was born at Napier in 1910. The family then settled in Christchurch where they lived in poverty. In about 1928 Frederick Albert deserted his "wife" and daughter and went to live in Auckland, where an advertisement for F.A. Tapson, *Commission Agent* appeared in a business directory dated 1940. Appparently there is no record in New Zealand of his death. Ethel Lizzie died in 1949.

(p 281) John Charles's family is included in the 1901 census return for Devon, Plymouth:

3 Wesley Ter

John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*46*	*F R Pensioner*	*Devon, Plymouth*
Mary A Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*40*		*Cornwall, Lanivet*
E A Tapson	*Dau*		*21*		*Devon, Devonport*
John C Tapson	*Son*		*18*	*Carpenter*	*Devon, Devonport*
W H Tapson	*Son*		*15*	*Clerk — Merchants*	*Ireland, Co. Donegal*
E E Tapson	*Son*		*11*		*Ireland, Co. Donegal*
E A Tapson	*Dau*		*8*		*Devon, Plymouth*

(p 287) Robert Walkey's household is listed in the 1901 census return for London, Hackney:

187 Richmond Rd

Robert W Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*78*	*Retired Tailor*	*Exeter, St Mary Major*
Elizabeth M Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*58*		*City of London*
Florence M Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*29*		*London, Hackney*

together with one servant.

(p 288) Robert George's family is complete in the 1901 return for London, Hackney:

26 Walsingham Road

Robert George Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*42*	*Railway Clerk*	*London, Hoxton*
Eliza A Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*42*		*London, Hackney*
Robert J Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*19*	*Railway Clerk*	*Norfolk, Norwich*
Frank M Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*15*	*Railway Clerk*	*London, Hackney*
Ernest H Tapson	*Son*		*12*		*London, Hackney*
Grace Tapson	*Dau*		*11*		*London, Hackney*
Cecil B Tapson	*Son*		*8*		*London, Hackney*
Stanley L Tapson	*Son*		*3*		*London, Hackney*

together with one servant.

Robert James married Dora Frances Croxson on 24 Sep 1910, and a son, Maurice Edmund, was born on 31 Jan 1914; Robert James died on 14 Jan 1915 at Clapton, near Hackney, aged 33. Frank Moy emigrated to Queensland, Australia, but during WW1 returned to Europe as a private in the 47th Battalion of the Australian Imperial Force; he was killed in France on 23 Dec 1917, aged 31. Ernest Harold married Sarah Huggard in Ontario on 5 Aug 1913, but later married Isabel McAlpine; they had four sons: James McAlpine, Robert Ernest on 18 May 1921, Patrick Walter on 28 Jan 1923 and Stanley Carson on 17 Jul 1924. Cecil Biggar married Ethel May Gudge on 19 Jul 1917 near Bournemouth, where they made their home; they had a son, Frank Stanley, in 1920, but he died on 10 Oct 1930, aged only 10; then a daughter, Eileen Dorothy Joyce, was born on 28 Nov 1927. Stanley Louis married Amy Lilian Searle at Stratton, Cornwall, on 30 Dec 1930 and they too settled in Bournemouth; a son, Searle Frank (known as Robert), was born on 12 Jul 1932, and Stanley was killed in a road accident on 13 Sep 1932, aged 35. Grace Emmeline did not marry.

(p 290) Sarah had already left home: she is included in the 1851 census return for the parish of St. Thomas the Apostle, Exeter (PRO HO107/1867 Fo. 80), in the Holding household:

Sara Topson	*Serv*	*12*	*General Servant*	*Devonshire, Kingsteignton*

(p 291) The address given in her Ford Park burial entry suggests that Mary Margaret Caroline, whose birth was registered (Plymouth R.D.) in 1862, Q4, was probably another daughter:

14 Jan 1863 Mary Margaret Caroline Tapson Rayleigh Street, Plymouth 2 mo.

At the time of the 1861 census John's widow, Charlotte, was at the home of her daughter-in-law Mary and in 1881 she was with her daughter Eliza Jane (*vide* page 291). The 1871 census return for Devon, Abbotskerswell, shows her at the home of her daughter Charlotte, who had married Richard Blackler (Newton Abbot R.D.) in 1862, Q4:

Burridge Place

Charlotte Blackler	*Head*	*Wid?36*	*Cook*	*Devon, Newton Abbot*
Charlotte Blackler		*8*	*Scholar*	*Devon, Ipplepen*
Eliza Blackler		*7*	*Scholar*	*Devon, Ipplepen*
Sarah M Blackler		*5*	*Scholar*	*Devon, Ipplepen*
Alice Blackler		*3*	*Scholar*	*Devon, Ipplepen*
Charlotte Tapson	*Mother*	*74*		*Devon, Teigngrace*

(p 293) The 1901 census return for Middlesex, Willesden has the entry:

31 Streatly(?) Road

Fred W Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*35*	*..Clerk Furniture W Home*	*Devon, Plymouth*
Carrie Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*27*		*London, St Pancras*
Dorothy Craske	*Niece*	*Un*	*22*	*Actress*	*London, Marylebone*
Blanche E B Tapson	*Dau*		*8*		*London, St Johns Wood*
Doris C C Tapson	*Dau*		*7M*		*Mdx, Brondesbury*

plus one servant.

At the time of the 1901 census Frederick William, who was born at Plymouth, would have been 41. However, this would appear to be his family because Blanche Evaline B., whose birth had been registered in 1893, Q1 (Marylebone R.D.), was clearly named after his sister Evelina, and in 1881 Frederick William's occupation had been recorded as *Clerk*. He had married Carrie Craske (St. Giles R.D.) in 1890, Q3, and the birth of Doris Cecilia C. was registered (Hendon R.D.) in 1900, Q4. The family is listed in the 1910 US Federal Census return for *Manhattan, New York*:

Frederick Tapson	*41*	*England*	*Head*	*Mar*	*Bookkeeper in Lace House*
Carrie Tapson	*37*	*England*	*Wife*	*Mar*	
Blanche E Tapson	*17*	*England*	*Dau*	*Single*	
Doris C Tapson	*9*	*England*	*Dau*	*Single*	

The immigration date for the family is recorded as 1908, but immigration dates given to the census enumerators tend to be quite unreliable, and have generally been omitted in these Addenda. In the 1920 US Federal Census for *Manhattan* the head of the household is recorded as *Frederick W Tapson*.

(p 295) Ebsworthy and Ann emigrated to Canada, where they are listed in the 1851 census return for *Thurlow Township, Hastings County, Ontario*:†

	AGE	BIRTHPLACE	OCCUPATION	RELIGION
Ebsworthy Tapson	*48*	*England*	*Farmer*	*Episcopalian*
Anne Tapson	*58*	*England*		*Episcopalian*

Ebsworthy's age is correct, and Ann's is consistent with that given in the 1841 census for Holsworthy (page 295), which placed her in the age band 45-49. Ebsworthy and Ann had settled close to Belleville, where Elizabeth, the widow of his brother William, had settled (see addendum above for page 157). Ebsworthy was clearly ill when he made his will on 7 October 1852, for he died within a month:†

† Researched by Al and Anne Fice (see footnote to page 429)

In the name of God Amen, I Ebsworthy Tapson of the Township of Thurlow, County of Hastings, and Province of Canada, Builder, being of sound mind and memory do hereby make and publish this my last Will and Testament in manner and form following / that is to say I give and devise and bequeath unto my dear Wife Ann Tapson her heirs and assigns all my Real Estate situated at Headons Corner and is composed of a part and parcel of Lot Number eight in the third concession of Thurlow aforesaid the particulars of which will fully show by referring to Deeds together with all Goods and Chattels of whatsoever kind and nature and the said Ann Tapson I hereby appoint my sole Executrix of this my last Will and Testament

In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this seventh day of October in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty two. *Ebsworthy Tapson*

Signed Sealed and published and declared of the above named Ebsworthy Tapson to be his last Will and Testament in the presence of us who have hereunto subscribed our names as witnesses in the presence of the Testator and in the presence of each other

C S Setesionti *James Brenton*

Ebsworthy died on 1 November aged 49. Probate was granted in the Surrogate Court in the County of Hastings on 23 February 1853 to his widow, Ann Tapson. In the grant of probate Ebsworthy is described as a *Carpenter and Builder*, and his date of death is given as *on or about the First day of November in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty two.*

The 1851 census return for *Thurlow Township, Hastings County*, also shows that Ebsworthy's youngest brother, Joseph, was living with his wife in the same house as Ebsworthy and Ann at that time:†

	AGE	BIRTHPLACE	OCCUPATION	RELIGION
Joseph Tapson	*45*	*England*	*Farmer*	*Bible Christian*
Mary Tapson	*40*	*England*		*Bible Christian*

Joseph's age is correctly recorded; he and Mary were probably married in Canada.

The 1861 census return for *Huntington Township, Hastings County*, has the entry:†

	AGE	BIRTHPLACE	OCCUPATION	RELIGION
Joseph Tapson	*44*	*England*	*Farmer*	*Bible Christian*
Mary Tapson	*40*	*England*		*Bible Christian*
Martha Tapson	*5*	*Canada West*		*Bible Christian*

The family were recorded as living in a single-storey log house built in 1855; Joseph and Mary had clearly not aged over the preceding decade! But a headstone in the White Lake Pioneer Cemetery, Huntingdon Township, gives Joseph's correct age (he would have been in his 60th year):†

JOSEPH TAPSON died May 1 1865 age 60 years

MARY wife of Joseph Tapson died Dec 10 1888 age 73 years

In the 1871 census return for Huntingdon Township (62C/2124) Mary's age had been given as 60.

(p 298) In 1901 Thomas and Johanna were still living at Devon, South Tawton:

Ramsley Village

Thomas Tapson	*Head*	*Mar 71*	*Carpenter*	*Devon, South Tawton*
Johanna Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar 70*		*Devon, South Tawton*

The marriage of their son, Thomas, to Emma Cossey was registered in 1891, Q2 (St. Thomas R.D.), and the birth of a son, Bertie, was registered in 1895, Q4 (St. Thomas R.D.). The family are included in the 1901 census return for Devon, Kenn:

Kennford

Thomas Tapson	*Head*	*Mar 36*	*Wheelwright*	*Devon, South Tawton*
Emma Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar 32*		*Devon, Kenton*
Bertie Tapson	*Son*	*Un 5*		*Devon, Kenn*

The death of *Thomas Tapson 85* was registered (Devon Central R.D.) in 1949, Q3.

† Researched by Al and Anne Fice

(p 299) At the time of the 1861 census Annie Jane and Emily Susanna Tayler were staying (presumably for the school holidays) with their maternal grandparents, Luke and Martha Shewring, at Horfield, Bristol.

(p 300) The 1891 census return for Bristol, St. James and St. Paul, lists William and Ann and all their surviving unmarried children except Annie Jane:

72 Ashley Road

William Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*73*	*Retired Schoolmaster*	*Devon, South Zeal*
Ann Hill Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*70*		*Glos, Bristol*
Alfred Edward Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*39*	*Chemist's Assistant*	*Glos, Bristol*
Lilla Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*34*		*Glos, Bristol*
Charles Wm Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*32*		*Glos, Bristol*
Archibald E Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*22*	*Chair Maker*	*Glos, Bristol*

plus one servant; Lilla must be Emily Susanna Tayler. Annie Jane appears in the 1891 census return for Devon, Tormoham, Torquay:

4 Torbay Road

Frideswide Shrewing	*Head*	*Un*	*72*	*Living on own means*	*Som, Bristol*
Mary Jane Moody	*Cousin*	*Un*	*60*	*Living on own means*	*Som, Bristol*
Annie J Tapson	*Niece*	*Un*	*42*	*House .....?*	*Som, Bristol*

Marston Ebsworthy is included in the 1891 return for Bristol, Bedminster:

Allingham Road

Marston E Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*38*	*Wholesale Clothier's Asst.*	*Bristol*
Louisa Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*40*		*Devon, Devonport*
Edward M Tapson	*Son*		*5*		*Bristol, Bedminster*

together with one servant. Of the 17 children of William and Ann only these six, and Alice Mary, who had married in 1882, were still alive in 1891, the year of William's death.

(p 302) Marston Ebsworthy is listed with his wife and all their surviving children in the 1901 return for Bristol:

13 Vicarage Road

Marston E Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*48*	*Wholesale Clothier's Manager*	*Bristol*
Louisa Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*49*		*S Devon, Devonport*
Edward M Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*15*	*Clerk Bristol Corporation Office*	*Bristol*
Winifred L Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*8*		*Bristol*
Gwendoline M Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*6*		*Bristol*

Archibald Ernest was in West Derby in 1901:

17 Wimpole Street

Archie Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*33*	*(Cabinet) Chair Maker*	*Bristol*
Blanche Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*32*		*Lancs, Liverpool*
William Tapson	*Son*		*9M*		*Lancs, Liverpool*

The birth of William had been registered in 1900, Q3 (West Derby R.D.); the births of Margery and Howard Andrew were subsequently registered in 1902, Q4, and 1909, Q3, respectively.

Annie Jane is included in the 1901 Bristol census:

8 Nugent Hill

Annie Tapson	*Head*	*Un*	*52*	*Living on Own Means*	*Bristol*

along with four unmarried female relatives and one servant.

The 1901 Bristol census also includes Alfred Edward and Emily Susanna Tayler:

138 North Road

Alfred Edward Tapson	*Head*	*Un*	*49*	*Chemist's Drug Assistant*	*Bristol*
Emily S T Tapson	*Sister*	*Un*	*44*		*Bristol*

Emily Susanna Tayler married soon after this census was taken.

Report in a Bristol newspaper of the death of Archibald Ernest Tapson in 1945:*

LATE MR. A. TAPSON

The death has occurred at Hightown, Liverpool, of Mr. Archibald Ernest Tapson (78), formerly of 25, Queen Sq., Bristol, uncle of Mr. E. M. Tapson, City Treasurer. He was the youngest son of the late Mr. Wm. Tapson, whose Academy at 25, Queen Sq. — which was demolished to make way for the new road — will be remembered by elder Bristolians. Mr. A. E. Tapson was born there, but went to Liverpool over 50 years ago. He returned to Bristol every year and took a keen interest in local affairs.

Archibald's age should have been reported as 76. His widow, Blanche, died (Crosby R.D.) in 1957, Q1, aged 87 years. A handwritten note gives details of his movements for five years from May 1889 when he would have been 21 years old:

12. 5. 1889	left Bristol,	went to Birmingham	12 months
12. 5. 1890	left Birmingham	went to Liverpool	14 months
22. 7. 1891	left Liverpool	went to Bristol	26 months
5. 9. 1893	left Bristol	went to Birkenhead	5 months
26. 2. 1894	left Birkenhead	went to Liverpool	3 weeks
13. 3. 1894	left Liverpool	went to Bristol	1 month
11. 4. 1894	left Bristol	went to Birmingham	4 months
13. 8. 1894	left Birmingham	went to Liverpool	

Newspaper reports following the death on 30 August 1962 of Edward Marston Tapson, the only son of Marston Ebsworthy:*

Former City Treasurer dies at 77

Mr. Edward Tapson, who entered Bristol council's treasurer's department as a boy of 15, and rose to become city treasurer, has died in Frenchay Hospital. He was 77 years old. Mr. Tapson, whose wife died in 1943, lived with his sister at 15, Clyde Park, Redland. When he retired in 1949 he had been city treasurer for 23 years. He was educated at Bristol Cathedral School, joining the city treasurer's department in 1901. During the First World War he served with the Artillery and the Royal Flying Corps. He was an enthusiastic traveller, and knew most of Europe well and had visited the United States and Canada. He was a past Master of the St. Nicholas Lodge, and, up until this year, treasurer of Bristol Masonic Benevolent Institution.

TRIBUTES TO EX-TREASURER

Past and present members of Bristol City Council and former and present-day members of the various corporation departments joined together today in paying their last tributes to Mr. Edward Marston Tapson, who was city treasurer for 23 years. With many representatives from masonic lodges, the Lord Mayor's Chapel was filled at the funeral service, which was conducted by Bishop Saunders, Lord Mayor's Chaplain. Interment was at Canford Cemetery.

Family mourners: Miss G. M. Tapson, sister; Mr. and Mrs. S. W. Ridler, brother-in-law and sister; Miss M. W. Ridler, niece; Mr. and Mrs. D. S. Jones, nephew and niece; Mr W. Tapson, cousin; Miss E. M. Marks, sister-in-law; Miss N. Baker.

The Lord Mayor (Alderman Leonard Stevenson) and the Sheriff (Mr. Stanley Evans) led the civic representatives. .....

Edward Marston had married Edith I. Stevens in 1914, Q4, in Bristol, where she died in 1943, Q4.

(p 308) At the time of the 1891 census Nancy was with her son Joseph in Hammersmith (*vide* Addendum to page 313 below); in 1901 she was with her daughter Susanna at Devonshire, Tavistock:

45 Barr.....

Susanna Petherwick	*Head*	*Wid*	*43*	*Keeper of Refreshment Room*	*Devon, Lamerton*
Jessie Petherwick	*Dau*	*Un*	*19*	*Mothers Help*	*Devon, Peter Tavy*
Edwin J Petherwick	*Son*	*Un*	*17*	*Post Office Clerk*	*Devon, Tavistock*
Richard H Petherwick	*Son*	*Un*	*15*	*Telegraph Messenger*	*Devon, Tavistock*
Alice M Petherwick	*Dau*	*Un*	*12*	*School Girl*	*Devon, Tavistock*
Edna K Petherwick	*Dau*	*Un*	*9*	*School Girl*	*Devon, Tavistock*
Thomas Petherwick	*Father in Law*	*Widr*	*82*	*Coach Builder*	*Cornwall, Kilkhampton*
Nancy Tapson	*Mother*	*Wid*	*71*	*Retired Farmer's Wife*	*Devon, Lydford*

* Information provided by William Tapson, son of Archibald Ernest

(p 308) George Blatchford's second marriage took place in Ontario:*

30 Jul 1861 *Golderich, Huron County*

George Tapson *25* *Residence: Usborne Township* *Born: England*
Parents: Thomas & Jane Tapson

Ann Dunsford *21* *Residence: Hay* *Born: Hay*
Parents: William Dunsford & Catherine King

Golderich is on the south-east shore of Lake Huron. George Blatchford has given his correct age.

The 1871 census of land-holders in *Stephen Township, Huron, Ontario, Canada* includes:

George Tapson	*Head*	*English*	*34*	*England*	*Farmer*	*C of E*

The 1881 return for *Stephen, Huron*, Household 57, lists:

Geo Tapson	*Married*	*English*	*47*	*England*	*Farmer*	*C of E*
Ann Tapson	*Married*	*English*	*40*	*Ontario*	*Farmer*	*C of E*
Thomas Tapson		*English*	*16*	*Ontario*	*Farmer, Son*	*C of E*
Charlotte Tapson		*English*	*15*	*Ontario*	*Farmer*	*C of E*
Wesley Tapson		*English*	*13*	*Ontario*	*Farmer*	*C of E*
William Tapson		*English*	*11*	*Ontario*	*Farmer*	*C of E*
Alice Tapson		*English*	*8*	*Ontario*	*Farmer*	*C of E*
NelsonTapson		*English*	*4*	*Ontario*	*Farmer*	*C of E*
Frederick Tapson		*English*	*1*	*Ontario*	*Farmer*	*C of E*

George Blatchford Tapson would have been 35 and 45 years old in 1871 and 1881 respectively.

Two of George's daughters were married in Ontario:

6 Oct 1879 *Middlesex County*

Samuel J Munroe *21* *Residence: Ailsa? Craig* *Born: Canada* *Labourer*
Bachelor *Methodist* *Parents: Thomas & Eliza Munroe*

Mary A Tapson *18* *Residence: Crediton* *Born: Stephen*
Spinster *Methodist* *Parents: George & Ann Tapson*

15 Jul 1886 *Corbell(?), Huron County:*

Edward Evans *23* *Residence: Stephen* *Born: Brest, Missouri* *Farmer*
Bachelor *Methodist* *Parents: Francis & Susan Evans*

Charlotte Tapson *20* *Residence: Stephen* *Born: Stephen*
Spinster *Methodist* *Parents: George & Annie Tapson*

George Blatchford and Ann emigrated to the U.S.A. The age and place of birth of Ann in the 1910 US Federal Census return for *Marlette, Sanilac, Michigan* are consistent with the information given in the 1881 Canadian return, and the age given for George is no more unreliable than that given in the earlier census; their immigration year is given as 1891, though this may not be accurate:

Geo Tapson	*78*	*England*	*Head*	*Married*	*Farmer*
Annie Tapson	*69*	*Canada*	*Wife*	*Married*	

1891 is also the date given in the 1910 US Federal Census for *Detroit, Michigan* for the immigration of George's son Nelson:

Nelson Tapson	*32*	*Canada*	*Head*	*Married*	*Commercial (Buying & Selling)*
Gelia Tapson	*31*	*Michigan*	*Wife*	*Married*	*None*
Clarica Tapson	*7*	*Michigan*	*Dau*	*Single*	*None*

No immigration date is given for George's son William in the 1910 US Federal Census return for *Monegaw Springs, St Clair, Missouri*, but he seems to have still been in Canada when his children were born about 1899, unless their place of birth was written in error:

William H Tapson	*39*	*Canada*	*Head*	*Married*	*Carpenter*
Louisa E Tapson	*34*	*Michigan*	*Wife*	*Married*	
Nelson R Tapson	*13*	*Canada*	*Son*	*Single*	
Sarah L P Tapson	*11*	*Canada*	*Dau*	*Single*	

* The 1871 census return for Stowford shows that Jane was now the head and licensed victualler of the Royal Oak, her father's inn, where she was living with her son, *Frank H. Tapson,* together with one servant and three lodgers

George's youngest daughter, now married to John Dunn, and his youngest son are included in the 1910 US Federal Census for *Detroit City, Wayne County, Michigan*:

John Dunn	*35*	*Michigan*	*Head*	*Married*	*Book Keeper (Seed House)*
Alice Dunn	*35*	*Canada*	*Wife*	*Married*	
Milton W Dunn	*13*	*Michigan*	*Son*	*Single*	
Annie K Dunn	*6*	*Michigan*	*Dau*	*Single*	
Richard Dunn	*27*	*Michigan*	*Brother*	*Single*	*Picker (Seed House)*
Frederick Tapson	*27*	*Canada*	*Br-in-law*	*Single*	*Picker (Seed House)*

The date of immigration given for Alice is 1895, that for Frederick is 1901.

George's eldest son was married in Ontario:

26 Dec 1892 *West Missouri, Middlesex County*

Thomas Tapson	*28*	*Residence: Michigan, U.S.*	*Born: Ontario* *Farmer*
Bachelor		*C. of E.*	*Parents: George & Ann Tapson*
Martha Halls	*23*	*Residence: Michigan, U.S.*	*Born: Ontario*
Spinster		*Methodist*	*Parents: William & Sophia Halls*

If his age was correctly given in 1881, Thomas would have been about 35 years old at the time of the 1900 US Federal Census for *Dresden, Cavalier County, North Dakota*:*

Thomas Tapson	*30*	*Canada*	*Head*	*Married*
Martha Tapson	*30*	*Canada*	*Wife*	*Married*

Their immigration year is given as 1895. Thomas's age is rather more accurately recorded in the 1920 US Federal Census for *Dresden, Cavalier, North Dakota*:

Thomas Tapson	*54*	*Ontario*	*Head*	*Married*	*Farmer (General Farm)*
Martha J Tapson	*50*	*Ontario*	*Wife*	*Married*	*None*
Bruce Tapson	*23*	*Manitoba*	*Son*	*Single*	*Labourer (Home Farm)*
Donald Tapson	*19*	*N Dakota*	*Son*	*Single*	*Labourer (Home Farm)*

Their immigration year is now recorded as 1896; either date is somewhat confusing, since Thomas and Martha both gave their residence at the time of their marriage as Michigan.

What became of George's son Wesley is not certain; however, an entry in the not very legible 1920 U.S. Federal Census return for *Hurley, Iron County, Wisconsin* might refer to him:

Tapson Westley	*52*	*Michigan*	*Head*	*Married*	*?*
Tapson Mable	*35*	*Wisconsin*	*Wife*	*Married*	
Knutson Guy	*11*	*Wisconsin*	*Stepson*	*Single*	
Knutson Loys	*14*	*Wisconsin*	*Stepson*	*Single*	
Knutson Clyde	*12*	*Wisconsin*	*Stepson*	*Single*	
Knutson Meroae	*9*	*Wisconsin*	*Stepson*	*Single*	

Wesley would have been exactly 52, but born in Ontario (though he might have emigrated to Michigan with his parents). It is also not known what became of Charlotte and Edward Evans.

(p 310) Jane married Samuel Hockaday at Sydenham Damerel on 23 December 1877. They are listed in the 1881 census return for Lamerton (PRO RG11/2220 Fo. 28):

Cottage

Samuel Hockaday	*Head*	*Mar*	*26*	*Copper Miner*	*Devon, Tavistock*
Jane Hockaday	*Wife*	*Mar*	*27*		*Devon, Lamerton*
Rosa Hockaday	*Dau*		*3*		*Devon, Lamerton*

Richard Fuge would have been 31 when listed in the 1891 census return for the parish of Buckland Monachorum:

Stokehill Farmhouse

Richard Tapson	*Servant*	*Un*	*27*	*Farm Servant*	*Devon. Lamerton*

Richard Fuge has not been found in the 1901 census, and no marriage was registered for him; however, the death of *Richard Fuge Tapson* *57* was registered (St. Thomas R.D.) in 1917, Q1; this would have been his exact age.

* From indexes of *www.ancestry.com* (image unavailable)

Sam, the youngest son of Thomas and Mary, married Cleland Northway (Launceston R.D.) in 1891, Q3; their two daughters were born at Tavistock, Lilian on 27 October 1891 and Florence on 26 March 1894. The family appear in the 1901 return for Devonshire, Tavistock, at *31 West Bridge Cotts*:

Samuel Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*31*	*General Labourer*	*Devon, Lamerton*
Cleland Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*28*		*Devon, Tavistock*
Lilian Tapson	*Dau*		*9*		*Devon, Tavistock*
Florence Tapson	*Dau*		*7*		*Devon, Tavistock*

In the 1891 census Sam's brother Albert was working as a *Farm Labourer* at Jacobstowe, Cornwall, and, surprisingly, gave his place of birth as *Cornwall, Stoke Climsland* (a few miles from Lamerton). He again gave Cornwall as his place of birth at the time of his marriage in Ontario:

29 May 1908 London, Middlesex County, Ontario:

Albert Tapson	*41*	*Residence: London, Ont*		*Born: Cornwall, Eng*	*Labourer*
Bachelor		*Methodist*		*Parents: Thomas & Mary Tapson*	
Ellen Marshall	*35*	*Residence: London, Ont*		*Born: Cornwall, Eng*	
Spinster		*Methodist*		*Parents: Edward & Elizabeth Marshall*	

Albert, his family and a lodger are listed in the 1911 census at *695 Grey Street, London, Ontario*:

Albert Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*44*	*Labourer*	*Born: Eng, Jun 1866*
Helen Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*37*	*None*	*Born: Eng, Feb 1873*
Ralph Tapson	*Son*	*Sing*	*1*		*Born: Ont, Jul 1909*

(p 311) In 1901 William Palmer was still living in Devonshire, Tavistock, at *4 Pym Street*:

William Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*47*	*Gardener (Not Domestic)*	*Devon, Lydford*
Ellen Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*57*		*Devon, Lamerton*
Laura A Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*20*	*Boot Shop Assistant*	*Devon, Tavistock*
Charles M Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*18*	*Grocer's Apprentice*	*Devon, Peter Tavy*
Bertram G Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*15*	*Railway Porter*	*Devon, Peter Tavy*
Alice M Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*13*	*School Girl*	*Devon, Tavistock*
William F Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*11*	*School Boy*	*Devon, Tavistock*

Mabel Ellen had married (Tavistock R.D.) in 1898, Q1.

(p 312) John Tapson married Lucy Plant (Fulham R.D.) in 1887, Q2; they are listed in the 1891 census return for London, Hammersmith, at *31 Tabor Road*:

John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*31*	*Police Constable*	*Devon, Lamerton*
Lucy Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*28*		*Suffolk. Blaxhall*
Ethel M Tapson	*Dau*		*4*		*Devon, Peter Tavy*
Maud Tapson	*Dau*		*1*		*Suffolk, Blaxhall*

Ethel M is clearly John's daughter from his first marriage, Ethel Maria, now 11 years old. The birth of Maud Lucy was registered (Plomesgate R.D.) in 1889, Q3; Plomesgate was the old registration district which included Blaxhall. Maud Lucy Tapson married Frederick G. Wookey (Fulham R.D.) in 1912, Q4. An Ethel Mary Tapson was married (Exeter R.D.) in 1907, Q3; this may have been the marriage of Ethel Maria. And the death of a *Lucy Tapson 90* was registered (Battersea R.D.) in 1954, Q1; this probably refers to John's second wife, who would then have been about that age.

(p 312) James and Harriet, together with their first six children, were listed in the 1901 census return for Middlesex, Chiswick, at *102 Duke Road*:

James Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*35*	*Journeyman Baker*	*Devon, Lamerton*
Harriett Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*35*		*Norfolk, Norwich*
James Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*10*		*London, Hammersmith*
Thomas Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*9*		*Norfolk, Norwich*
Florence Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*7*		*Middlesex, Chiswick*
Mabel Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*6*		*Middlesex, Chiswick*
Alfred Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*4*		*Middlesex, Chiswick*
Dorothy Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*2*		*Middlesex, Chiswick*

(p 313) At the time of the 1891 census Thomas's widow Nancy was at the home of her son Joseph in London, Hammersmith:

38 Havelock Road					
Joseph Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*22*	*Baker*	*Devonshire, Lamerton*
Charlotte Annie W Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*21*		*Wilts, Sutton Veny*
Joseph Walter Tapson	*Son*		*9 days*		*London, Hammersmith*
Nancy Tapson	*Mother*	*Wid*	*59*		*Devon, Lydford*

Joseph, Charlotte and their first six children appear in the 1901 census return for London, Hammersmith:

55 Dalling Road					
Joseph Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*31*	*Furnature Remover*	*Devon, Lamerton*
Charlotte Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*31*		*Wiltshire, Sutton Viney*
Joseph Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*10*		*London, Kensington*
Alice Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*8*		*London, Notting Hill*
Henry Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*6*		*London, Hammersmith*
Ethel Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*5*		*London, Hammersmith*
Esther Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*3*		*London, Hammersmith*
Reginald Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*1*		*London, Hammersmith*

This return confirms that Reginald Thomas V. was their son.

Joseph Walter married Doris E. Still in 1912, Q2 (Fulham R.D.); Alice Kate married Frederick W.G. Greenwood in 1916, Q2 (Hammersmith R.D.) and they subsequently emigrated to New Zealand; Henry John (known as *Jack)* married Nora Walls in 1922, Q4 (Hendon R.D.); Ethel Maud married John A. Rogers in 1919, Q1 (Hammersmith R.D.); Esther Florence M. (known as *Florence*) married Alfred J. Hadley in 1920, Q1 (Hammersmith R.D.); Walter Leonard (known as *Len*) married Maud A. Newton in 1926, Q3 (Brentford R.D.); Earle (known as *Bob*) married Mildred (*Milly*) Butt in 1931, Q2 (Hammersmith R.D.); Emily Susannah (known as *Susan*) married George D. Seward in 1930, Q3 (Hammersmith R.D.). Christabel (known as *Winnie*) and Rosalind D. (known as *Rose*) did not marry.

(p 315) William, son of Nicholas Tapson and Patience Ball, was baptized on 6 May 1795 at Tavistock. And William, son of Nicholas's youngest brother, George, was baptized at Bridestowe on 21 December 1795. Thus, assuming they were both baptized within a few weeks of birth, each would have been in his 56th year at the time of the 1851 census, when William Tapson of Shaugh Prior (then living in Ugborough parish) gave his age as 56. Also, William son of Nicholas would have been 62 years old and William son of George would have been very nearly 62 years old when William Tapson of Shaugh Prior was buried on 7 October 1857 and his age was recorded as 62.

The assumption that William Tapson of Shaugh Prior was George's son has been based on the fact that he gave his place of birth as Bridestowe in the 1851 census, and that he named his first two children Maria and John, which were the names of his two eldest siblings, the first-born children of George; whereas Nicholas and Patience had been living at Tavistock since the early 1780's and their son William was baptized at Tavistock (and was the only William Tapson baptized at Tavistock parish church during the relevant period). It is of course possible that Patience had returned to her mother, or mother-in-law, in Bridestowe for William's birth and that he was later informed of this, in which case, though unlikely, he could have been William Tapson of Shaugh Prior. See also the above Addendum note to page 266.

William's daughter Mary Ann was married at the church of Plymouth, St. Andrew:

3 Dec 1848	***John Luxon***	*Full*	*Bachelor*	*Laborer*	*Cambridge St.*
			(Father: John Luxon, Laborer)		
	Mary Ann Tapson	*Full*	*Spinster*		*Athenæum St.*
			(Father: Thomas Tapson, Laborer)		

by Banns in the presence of Robert Luxon & Elizabeth Luxon•

• The 1841 census for Ugborough shows that Mary and her son John were already living at North Fillham

That the incorrect name given for Mary's father in the marriage register was a clerical error is confirmed by the 1851 census return for Stoke Damerel (PRO HO107/1882, Fo. 614), in which Mary's birthplace is correctly recorded and the age given for her is almost correct — she would actually have been 25 years old:

103 Navy Row

John Luxon	*Head*	*Mar*	*25*	*Lab*	*Cornwall, Looe*
Mary A. Luxon	*Wife*	*Mar*	*24*		*Devon, Shaugh*
John Luxon	*Son*		*1*		*„ Morice Town*

The Mary Ann Luxon, one of the witnesses at Elizabeth's wedding, was therefore probably her sister.

The 1861 census return for Devon, Egg Buckland, shows William's widow still living there:

55 Toll Gate

Mary Tapson	*Head*	*Wid*	*52*	*Tollgate Keeper*	*Devon, Shaugh*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*30*	*Dress Maker*	*Devon, Harford*
Elizabeth Luxon	*Gd Dau*		*9*	*Scholar*	*Devon, Morice Town*

The birthplace of Mary's granddaughter Elizabeth Luxon, like that of her brother John, was also that part of Devonport known as Morice Town.

(p 320) William James Day Tapson and his wife (née Emily Louisa Mason) were listed in the 1901 census return for Berkshire, Winkfield, the next parish to Warfield:

Forest House

Hannah Mason	*Head*	*Wid*	*73*		*Berks, Yattendon*
William J D Tapson	*Son-in-law*	*Mar*	*39*	*Poultry Farmer*	*Devon, Sea Trenchard*
Emily L Tapson	*Dau*	*Mar*	*36*	*Laundress*	*Berks, Bracknell*

(p 321) Ebsworthy and Catherine had moved to Ferryhill, between Durham and Stockton-on-Tees, by 1870, and they are included in the 1871 census return for Ferryhill:

Low Spennymoor Village

Ebsworthy Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*40*	*Coal Miner*	*Devon, Lewtrenchard*
Catherine Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*40*		*Devon, Mary Tavy*
Selina Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*19*		*Devon, Lamerton*
Kezia Tapson	*Dau*		*8*		*Devon, Milton Abbott*
Karen Hapuch Tapson	*Dau*		*5*		*Devon, Lamerton*
John James Tapson	*Son*		*3*		*Durham, Lanchester*
Elizabeth A Tapson	*Dau*		*1*		*Durham, Shincliffe*

Of their surviving children not included in this return Mary was already married, Ellen Louisa married in 1876, but nothing more is heard of Julia Ann Jackson after the 1861 census.

(p 322) At the time of the 1891 census Ebsworthy and Catherine were still in Worcester, Oldbury:

Church Square

Ebsworthy Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*60*	*Sampler of Sulphur ?*	*Devon, Lewtrenchard*
Catherine Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*60*		*Devon, Mary Tavy*
Keren Lapuch Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*25*	*Board School Teacher*	*Devon, Lamerton*

In the next house lived their daughter Kezia, her husband, Peter Thompson, described in the 1891 census as a *certificated teacher*, their two sons and three daughters. Kezia and Peter Thompson had married (West Bromwich R.D.) in 1884, Q2. In 1901 Ebsworthy's widow, Catherine, is listed in the census return for Staffordshire, Smethwick:

163 St Paul's Road

Catherine Tapson	*Head*	*Wid*	*71*	*Living on Own Means*	*Devonshire, Marytavy*
Selina Gray	*Dau*	*Mar*	*49*		*Devonshire, Lamerton*
Ellen Parker	*Dau*	*Mar*	*47*		*Cornwall, Calstock*
Keren H Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*36*	*Board School Teacher*	*Devonshire, Lamerton*

Selina had married William Gray (West Bromwich R.D.) in 1873, Q4, and Ellen Lousia had married Thomas Parker (Durham R.D.) in 1876, Q2.

Catherine's only surviving son, John James, had already emigrated to the U.S.A. and his *certificate of naturalization* was issued at the US District Court, Brooklyn, on 3 Sep 1903; this states that he was born 10 Jun 1867, arrived at Philadelphia, PA, Apr 1889, was English and a Pattern Maker.* John James is included in the 1910 US Federal Census return for *Westchester County, New York*:

John Tapson	*42*	*England*	*Head*	*Married*	*Pattern Maker (Engineers)*
Mary Tapson	*42*	*England*	*Wife*	*Married*	

and in the 1920 US Federal Census for *Westchester, New York*:

John J Tapson	*53*	*England*	*Head*	*Married*	*Pattern Maker (At Home)*
Mary Ann Tapson	*56*	*England*	*Wife*	*Married*	

John's immigration year is given as 1889, Mary's as 1888.

(p 325) The Prisoners Calendar of the Exeter Quarter Sessions (DRO QS32/319) has the entry:

Name	*Age*	*Occupation*		*Date of Warrant*	*Received into Custody*
John Tapson	*28*	*Cab Driver*	*Imp*	*15 Dec 1868*	*15 Dec 1868*

Offence
Having on the 15 December 1868, at Tormoham, maliciously wounded or inflicted grievous bodily harm upon Samuel Endacott the younger

When Tried	*Before Whom Tried*	*Verdict of Jury*	*Sentence*
6 Jan	*Earl of Devon*	*Guilty of maliciously wounding*	*12 cal. months hd. labor*

Imp means that he could *read and write imperfectly*.

The edition of the *Exeter Flying Post* dated 13 January 1869, the week following the trial, carried a report of the proceedings in court:

JOHN TAPSON, 28, cab-driver, was indicted for having on the 15th December, at Tormoham, maliciously wounded Samuel Endacote, the younger. The prosecutor, who is a cab-driver, said he was walking on the day in question to his coach house, and saw the prisoner, who had a knife in his hand. Prisoner rushed at him, inflicting a cut on the chin. No quarrel had taken place whatever between them. The jury found the prisoner guilty, but recommended him to mercy. Sentenced to twelve calendar month's — hard labour.

John did not finish his sentence in Exeter prison: he died shortly before he was due to be released and was buried in Exeter Cemetery, of which the register has the entry:

3 Dec 1869	*John Tapson*	*Devon County Prison*	*28*

If his age was correctly recorded this John would have been born about 1840. The only birth of a John Tapson to be registered in England around 1840 was John Tapson of Bridestowe #90a, but he was living in London in 1871 (*vide* page 150). It therefore seems probable that the prisoner was George Tapson, the eldest son, born in 1832, of Robert Tapson of Kenn: in 1851 he was living in the next parish to Tormoham, where the offence occurred, and was named as John in the census return of that year (*vide* page 325), perhaps not in error but because it was the name which he had adopted. The age given for him in the 1851 census was correct, but at the time of the offence he would have been 36. No entry for this George (or John) has been found in the 1861 census.

Charles Alford (Alfred) was listed in the 1901 census return for Lancashire, Much Woolton:

Liverpool Convalescent Hospital

Charles Tapson	*Patient*	*Mar*	*54*	*Sailor*	*Devonshire, Torquay*

He would have been 61 years old. His wife was listed in the 1901 return for Lancashire, Liverpool:

14 Greetham Street

Ellen Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*44*	*Machinist*	*Oil Clothing*	*Yorks*

together with a boarder. If Ellen gave her age correctly in 1881 then she would have been 49 in 1901.

* *www.ancestry.com*

(p 327) There had been yet another move for Joseph's family, which was listed in the 1861 census return for Middlesex, Kensington:

13 Worlbourn(?) Garden

Joseph Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*58*	*Publican*	*Devon, Bridstow*
Mary Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*52*		*Devon, Milton Abbott*
Agnes Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*25*		*Surry, Lambeth*
Joseph Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*23*	*Railway Clerk*	*Middlesex, Islington*
Alfred Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*21*	*No Occupation*	*Middlesex, Islington*
Charles Tapson	*Son*		*15*	*Scholar*	*Middlesex, Westminster*
Frederick Tapson	*Son*		*8*		*Middlesex, Pimlico*

Missing were Ellen Maria and Amelia Mary. Amelia Mary was included in the 1861 census for Cripplegate, East London:

16 Edmunds Place

John Stephens	*Head*	*Mar*	*57*	*Journeyman Brush Maker*	*Devonshire, Exeter*
Mary Ann Stephens	*Wife*	*Mar*	*58*		*Devonshire, Exeter*
Mary Amelia Tapson	*Visitor*		*12*		*St. James, Pall Mall*

The age and place of birth of Amelia Mary, who had been named as Mary in the 1851 census (*vide* page 326) were correctly recorded.

Joseph Tapson Junior was included in the 1871 census for Kent, Bexley Heath:

Black Fen

Joseph Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*32*	*Accountant*	*Middlesex, Islington*
Georgina F Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*32*		*Middlesex, St. Pancras*
Grenville W T Goddard	*Stepson*		*8*	*Scholar*	*Middlesex, Acton*
Henry A Goddard	*Stepson*		*7*	*Scholar*	*Middlesex, St. Pancras*
Josephine M A F Tapson	*Dau*		*2*		*Kent, Erith*
Gilbert T W Tapson	*Son*		*3 mth*		*Kent, Lee*
Henry Barridge	*Father-in-law*	*Widr*	*70*	*Annuitant*	*Middlesex, St. Marylebone*
Mary Ann Pollock	*Serv*		*17*	*Domestic Servant*	*Glasgow, Scotland*

The death of Gilbert Tisdell W. Tapson was registered (Dartford R.D.) in 1871, Q2; his birth seems not to have been registered. It was probably whilst an *accountant* that Joseph committed the crime that landed him in prison. At that time accountancy was not a profession: anyone could call himself an accountant, as did, for instance, Ebsworthy John Tapson (page 221); possibly Joseph was a clerk with responsibility for dealing with his employer's accounts.

(p 328) Passengers on the *Wyoming*, which arrived at New York from Liverpool and Queenstown on 6 April 1887, included *Kate Tapson 51, Maud Tapson 15, Archd Tapson 11*, and *Alfd Tapson 10*.* Alice Maud, Archie Wentworth and Alfred Victor, the children of Joseph and Georgina, would have been 15, 13 and 12 respectively at the time, and Georgina 52 (if she gave her correct age in the 1881 census), but why her name should have been recorded as Kate is a mystery; she is also described as *Matron*. The 1900 US Federal Census (below) indicates that Joseph had entered the U.S.A. a year or two before his wife and children arrived.

The 1900 US Federal Census for *Redwood Township, Santa Clara County, California*, lists:

Joseph Tapson	*60*	*England*	*Head*	*Married*	*Retired*
Josephine Tapson	*65*	*England*	*Wife*	*Married*	
Archie W Tapson	*26*	*England*	*Son*	*Single*	*Book-keeper*
Tomikichi Nakai	*19*	*Japan*	*Servant*	*Single*	*Cook*

Joseph would have been 62 at the time of the census, Georgina 65 and Archie 26; again it is not clear why Georgina gave a false name (Josephine being the name of her eldest daughter who died in England). Redwood City, as it is now called, is part of the San Francisco conurbation. The immigration year for Joseph is given as 1885, that for Josephine and Archie as 1887, and that for Tomikichi Nakai as 1900.

* *www.ancestry.com* New York Passenger Lists 1820-1900 (images viewed)

The 1910 US Federal Census return for *Oakland, Alameda, California*, includes:

Joseph Tapson	*72*	*England*	*Head*	*Married*
Georgina Tapson	*75*	*England*	*Wife*	*Married*

Correct names and ages are now given. Oakland is another part of the San Francisco conurbation.

The 1910 US Federal Census for *Washington Township, Marion County, Indiana*, lists:

Alfred Tapson	*35*	*England*	*Head*	*Married*	*Com. traveler for cigar house*
Susana Tapson	*33*	*Pennsylvania*	*Wife*	*Married*	
Daniel Tapson	*4*	*Maryland*	*Son*	*Single*	
Alfred J Tapson	*1*	*Indiana*	*Son*	*Single*	

Alfred Victor is also included in the 1930 US Federal Census return for *San Francisco, California*:

Alfred Victor Tapson	*55*	*England*	*Lodger*	*Divorced*	*Clerk in Hotel*

Alfred Victor gave his correct age on both occasions. He had married Susan Killop about 1905 and died on 22 May 1947 at San Francisco.‡

Archie Wentworth married Alice W. Bowman in 1902 at Orange, California, and died on 23 September 1904 in California;‡ his widow and daughter are listed in the 1910 US Federal Census return for *San Francisco*:

Mary F Glasson	*52*	*Illinois*	*Head*	*Widow*	*Keeper (Apartments)*
Alice B Tapson	*38*	*Massachusetts*	*Lodger*	*Widow*	*Dressmaker*
Frances N Tapson	*7*	*California*	*Lodger*		

Frances appears again in the 1920 US federal census for *Salt Point, Sonoma, California* (just to the north of San Francisco):

Henry C Bowman	*43*	*California*	*Head*	*Married*	*Farmer*
Emila A Bowman	*43*	*Illinois*	*Wife*	*Married*	
Frances Tapson	*16*	*California*	*Niece*	*Single*	*(father born in England)*

(p 328) Alfred and his wife (née Lilian Mary J. Bailey) are listed in the 1891 census return for London, St. Marylebone, at *83 & 85 Cleveland Street (Flats)*:

Alfred Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*52*	*Library Assistant*	*London, Lambeth*
Lilian M J Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*35*		*London, St Pancras*

The 1901 census for London, St Pancras, shows them living at *60 Stanhope*:

Alfred Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*61*	*Library Assistant*	*London, Lambeth*
Lilian Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*40*		*London, St. Pancras*

(p 329) Charles Tapson married Sarah Jane Heartshorn, born at Athlone in 1848, at Nusselrabad, Bombay, on 5 November 1873. The 1891 census return for Lancashire, Middleton, Rhodes, includes:

8 Yates Street

Charles Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*46*	*Joiner*	*London, Covent Garden*
Sarah J Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*32*		*Ireland, Athlone*
Charles W J H Tapson	*Son*		*15*	*Feeder in Print Works*	*East India, Agra, British*
Georgina F Tapson	*Dau*		*13*	*Plaiter in Print Works*	*Lancs, Rhodes*
Sarah E Tapson	*Dau*		*10*	*Plaiter in Print Works*	*Lancs, Rhodes*
Henry E Tapson	*Son*		*6*	*Scholar*	*Lancs, Rhodes*
Rainier Brocker Tapson	*Son*		*10M*		*Lancs, Rhodes*

In 1901 Charles was still in Lancashire, Middleton, Rhodes:

658 Manchester Old Road

Charles Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*56*	*Joiner*	*Middlesex, London*
Sarah J Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*42*		*Ireland*
Sarah E Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*20*		*Lancashire, Rhodes*
Henry E Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*16*	*Labourer (Print Works)*	*Lancashire, Rhodes*
Merina B Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*10*		*Lancashire, Rhodes*
Frederick G H Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*7*		*Lancashire, Rhodes*

It would seem that *Merina B* was Reinier Brocker, who would have been been 10 at the time.

‡ Information from William Love of Westmont, Illinois

In 1901 Charles's eldest son, Charles William, was in Lancashire, South Manchester:

51 Greenhills

Charles W Tapson Boarder Un 25 Wheelwright India

and Georgina Frances was in Lancashire, Prestwich:

30 Clifton Road

Georgina F Tapson Servant Un 23 General Servant Domestic Lancs, Rhodes

Sergeant Henry Edward Tapson of the Machine Gun Corps (Inf) died in action in France on Monday, 30 September 1918; his age was correctly given as 33 years.

(p 331) At the time of the 1881 census Melina, who married John H. Irish in 1875, Q2, was living next door to her parents at 2 Pottery Court with her husband, a daughter aged 5, a son aged 1, and her mother-in-law (PRO RG11/2190 Fo. 45). Mary Ann, who married Richard Goodanew in 1870, Q4, was not far away, at 40 Vauxhall Street (PO RG11/2190 Fo.122), with her husband, a daughter aged 10 and a son aged 6. Elizabeth, who married John Charles Hiscott in 1878, Q4, was also living in Plymouth Charles at 69 Exeter Street (PRO RG11/2192 Fo. 22) with her husband and a son aged 2.

(p 332) The 1901 return for Plymouth, St Jude, includes:

64 Exeter Street

Samuel Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*78*	*Retired(?)*	*Devon, Bridestowe*
Mary Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*79*		*Devon, Okehampton*

Samuel and Emma appear in the 1901 census return for Plymouth:

3 Brunswick Road

Samuel Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*47*	*Wood Sawyer*	*Devon, Plymouth*
Emma Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*42*		*Devon, Plymouth*
Lily R M Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*23*	*Domestic Servant*	*Devon, Plymouth*
Florence Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*19*	*Tailoress*	*Devon, Plymouth*
George Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*18*	*Plumber*	*Devon, Plymouth*
Lucy E Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*15*	*Domestic Servant*	*Devon, Plymouth*
Emily E Tapson	*Dau*		*8*		*Devon, Plymouth*
Elsie M Tapson	*Dau*		*6*		*Devon, Plymouth*
Edith M Tapson	*Dau*		*5*		*Devon, Plymouth*
Emily C Milton	*Lodger*	*Un*	*56*	*Sick Nurse*	*Devon, Plymouth*
Olive Rickard	*Gr'dau*		*8M*		*Devon, Plymouth*

The births had been registered (Plymouth R.D.) of Emily Ellen in 1892, Q2; Elsie Maleta in 1894, Q2; and Edith Maud in 1896, Q2. The identity of Olive Rickard remains a mystery.

Samuel Richard, the eldest son of Samuel and Emma, appears in the 1901 census return for Alverstoke, having moved to Hampshire (where his grandparents had been living in 1851):

103 High Street

Saml R Tapson Boarder Un 23 Manager Boot Warehouse Devon, Plymouth

Samuel Richard married in 1902, Q2 (Portsmouth R.D.) and died (North Buckinghamshire R.D.) in 1955, Q1, aged 77. Lily Rosina married in 1903, Q2 (Plymouth R.D.), George Courtaney in 1917, Q3 (Hambledon R.D.), and Lucy Eleanor in 1902, Q4 (Exeter R.D.). Edith Maud married Ernest Roberts at the parish church of St. Andrew, Plymouth, on 8 April 1918; Emily Ellen married Sidney Roberts in 1920, Q3 (Plymouth R.D.); Elsie Maleta married William H. Martin in 1927, Q3 (Plymouth R.D.). Florence Lilian, who did not marry, died in 1955, Q2 (Plymouth R.D.), aged 73.

(p 334) Rhoda Ann had already died when John and his wife were listed in the 1861 census return for Devon, Christow (St. Thomas R.D.):

Stratton

John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*34*	*Copper & Lead Miner*	*Devon, Bridestowe*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*24*		*Devon, Bridestowe*

Christow is a little village on the edge of Dartmoor some 10 miles southwest of Exeter.

(p 334) All the family except Willie were listed in the 1891 census return for the parish of Horton (PRO RG12/4239 Fo. 54):

Bebside Furness

John Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*64*	*Coalminer*	*Devon, Bridestowe*
Eliza Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*54*	*Housewife*	*„ „*
John Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*25*	*Warehouseman*	*Cornwall, Calstock*
Albert Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*11*	*Scholar*	*Durham, Shotton*

Willie had married Mary Jane Fenwick in 1887, Q1; and the births were registered of John Willie in 1885, Q4 (just over a year before Willie's marriage to Mary Jane Fenwick), Charles Fenwick in 1887, Q4, and Thomas in 1890, Q2 (Tynemouth R.D.). The family appear on Fo. 58 of the same return:

Bebside Furness

William Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*26*	*Coalminer*	*Cornwall, Calstock*
Mary J. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*24*	*Housewife*	*Northd., Horton*
John W. Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*5*	*Child*	*„ „*
Charles Tapson	*Son*		*3*	*„*	*„ „*
Thomas Tapson	*Son*		*11 mo.*	*„*	*„ „*
John Fenwick	*Father*	*Widr*	*66*	*Retired*	*„ (?)Whittingham*

Subsequently the births were registered, also in the Tynemouth R.D., of James Peard in 1892, Q3, of twin boys, Alfred and Samuel, in 1894, Q2 (both dying in the same quarter), and of Elizabeth Jane in 1895, Q3. The birth of their last child, Mary Jane, was registered in Morpeth R.D. in 1898, Q2; her death was registered the following quarter in Tynemouth R.D., and her mother's death in the same quarter in Morpeth R.D. Willie remarried in 1900, Q3, his second wife being Margaret Hyslop.

Willie is listed with his second wife in the 1901 census return for Northumberland, Ashington, with the surviving children from his first marriage and the first child from his second marriage, whose birth had been registered in 1901, Q1 (Morpeth R.D.):

25 Fifth Row

Willie Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*36*	*Coal Miner Deputy ...man*	*Cornwall, Calstock*
Margaret Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*25*		*Scotland*
John W Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*15*	*Coal Miner Leader of Timber ...?*	*Northld, Bebside*
Charles F Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*13*		*Northld, Bebside*
Thomas Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*10*		*Northld, Bebside*
James P Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*8*		*Northld, Bebsude*
Elizabeth J Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*5*		*Northld, Bebside*
Andrew Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*2M*		*Northld, Ashington*

Willie and Margaret went on to have more children, of whom William Hyslop Tapson, a corporal in the Fifth Battalion of the King's Own Scottish Borderers, died in action in Germany on 9 April 1945, aged 28. Willie's second wife, Margaret, died in 1946, Q4, aged 71, Willie having died on 24 December 1935.

Willie's obituary notice appeared in *The Ashington Collieries Magazine* of February 1936:

MR WILLIAM TAPSON, J.P.

Mr Tapson came to Ashington in 1891, worked in the pits in the usual way until 1920 when he became a charge-man on the waste, filling this position until he retired.

That paragraph covers in a few words his working life, but the full story of his social and public activities would fill a volume.

He was for twenty years a member of the Ashington Urban District Council, and as chairman of the Child Welfare Committee, for the work and aspirations of which he showed great ardour, he did much to bring eventually into being the Ashington Child Welfare Centre, even though this was a hope not yet realized when he relinquished his labours on the Council. He was also a representative on the Northumberland County Council, while his practical interest in education was made evident by the fact that he was for several years chairman of the Evening Class Committee and a manager of the Bothal Schools up to the time they were taken over by the County Council administration.

In 1925 he was created a Justice of the Peace for the County of Northumberland.

In 1923, on the retirement of the late Alderman John Craigs from the position, Mr Tapson took over the secretaryship of the Ashington Nursing Association, becoming about the same time a member of the Executive Committee of the Ashington Hospital. For nine years he fulfilled the arduous and exacting duties in connection with the Nursing Association in a voluntary capacity, this being one of his finest gifts of service to the public of Ashington.

Among the populace generally, however, he became most widely and intimately known through his early work in connection with the local miners' organization. In 1920, he concluded fifteen years of service as the general secretary, and thereafter acted as their financial secretary and represented the miners as Governor of the Royal Infirmary and Eye Infirmary in Newcastle.

The Independent Methodist Church at Ashington had the advantage of Mr Tapson's administrative ability for many years from 1895. He occupied at various times the positions of president, Sunday School superintendent and treasurer. He was president of the Newcastle Independent Methodist Circuit for four years and in addition represented this Circuit on the Northern Counties Confederation of Independent Methodists. And for fifty-six years he was a member of the Sons of Temperance Society.

During a funeral oration delivered by Mr. William Straker he said that Mr. Tapson possessed the art of being kind in a superlative degree, and that was the secret of his influence and power in his public work. While Mr. Tapson always held pertinaciously to his own views, he always expressed differing opinions in a kindly and courteous way. He was, in the highest sense of the word, a gentleman, and he leaves behind him a record of valuable public service which will be long remembered.

He retired in 1931 and passed on the 24th December, 1935, at the age of 71 years.

Mr. Tapson was very fond of Camping and our picture shows him and his wife in front of their tent at Cresswell.

Willie's brother, John Peard, married Thomasina Forster in 1901, Q1 (Tynemouth R.D.). His widowed mother, Elizabeth, was included in their household in the 1901 return for Cowpen:

12 Tweedy Street

John Peard Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*35*	*Warehouseman*	*Cornwall, Calstock*
Thomasine Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*32*		*Northd, Bebside*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Mother*	*Wid*	*64*		*Devon, Bridestowe*

John Peard died intestate at 11 Clarence Place, Gosforth, on 24 November 1921, aged 55; and Thomasina's death was registered in 1922, Q1 (Morpeth R.D.), her age being given as 53. Thomasina had not taken out Letters of Administration of her husband's estate, and these were granted to Winifred Forster Mood, *the lawful daughter and only next of kin of the intestate*, on 9 May 1933. Winifred Forster's birth had been registered in 1907, Q1 (Morpeth R.D.), and she married Robert Mood in 1931, Q2 (Morpeth R.D.); it is not known whether John Peard and Thomasina had other children who were already dead by 1933.

(p 337) In 1871 Jane and her children were all in Buckland Monachorum; she and three of the children were with her parents:

Horrabridge

Walter Willcocks	*Head*	*Mar*	*78*	*Farm Labourer*		*Devon, B Monachorum*
Betsy Willcocks	*Wife*	*Mar*	*75*	*„*	*Wife*	*Devon, Bere Ferrers*
Jane Dobson	*Dau*	*Mar*	*43*	*„*	*Dau*	*Devon, B Monachorum*
Elizabeth Ann Dobson	*Gr'dau*	*Un*	*18*	*Dress Maker*		*Devon, B Monachorum*
Robert Dobson	*Gr'son*	*Un*	*4*	*Scholar*		*Portugal British Subject*
Mary Jane Dobson	*Gr'dau*	*Un*	*4*	*Scholar*		*Portugal British Subject*

Another child was with the family of the brother of Jacob Gerry, husband of Jane's sister Mary (p 155):

Horrabridge

John Gerry	*Head*	*Mar*	*54*	*Miner*	
Eliza Gerry	*Wife*	*Mar*	*50*	*Miners Wife*	*Devon, Tavistock*
.....					
John Tapson	*Nephew*		*10*	*Scholar*	*Devon, B Monachorum*

The remaining children were staying with, perhaps, the family of Jane's brother:

Horrabridge					
Mary Ann Willcocks	*Wife*	*Mar*	*37*	*Miner's Wife*	*Devon, Walkhampton*
Emmeline Tapson	*Visitor*	*Un*	*16*		*Devon, B Monachorum*
Frederick Tapson	*Visitor*	*Un*	*14*		*Devon, B Monachorum*
Rhoda Tapson	*Visitor*	*Un*	*8*	*Scholar*	*Portugal British Subject*

A memorial card gives the death of Robert Tapson as 2 July 1879,* but the place of death is unknown.

Robert Henry is listed in the 1901 census return for Devon, Plymouth:

4 Ham Lane					
Robert Hy Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*33*	*Carman*	*Portugal British Subject*
Louisa Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*33*		*Devon, Plymouth*
Archibald R H Tapson	*Son*		*10*		*Devon, Plymouth*
Bertram A Tapson	*Son*		*4*		*Devon, Plymouth*
Louisa D Tapson	*Dau*		*1*		*Devon, Plymouth*

The births had been registered (Plymouth R.D.) of Frederick William in 1893, Q4 (died 1895, Q3), Bertram Alfred in 1896, Q2, and Louisa Dorothy in 1899, Q3; further children of Robert Henry and Louisa were later born at Plymouth: Rhoda Mabel in 1902, Q3, Edna Charity in 1905, Q4, and Marjorie Lilian Mercy in 1912, Q2 (died 1913, Q2). Robert Henry died in 1916, Q3, aged 49; Louisa's death was registered (Plymouth R.D.) in 1950, Q1, her age was given as 83.

John married Eliza Sarah Oliver in 1882, Q4, and Rhoda married Arthur Charles Titherley, also in 1882, Q4. Frederick and John and their wives emigrated to Australia on the *Chimborazo*, arriving on 26 December 1882.† Frederick and Elizabeth Mary had no children; John and Eliza Sarah had three: Francis Robert in 1883, John in 1885 (died 1887), and Lily B. in 1888 (died 1890).‡ Richard Knapman and Mary Jane emigrated to Australia, arriving on the *Lusitania* in November 1886,† the month after their marriage. William Stawt and Emmeline also emigrated to Australia; all four familes settled in Sydney.* Frederick, a builder, died on 30 December 1931; John, a carpenter, on 16 November 1910.* Elizabeth Mary died in 1935, Eliza Sarah in 1901.‡

* Information from Julia Parker, a descendant of Robert Henry Tapson

† www.access.prov.vic.gov.au/public Index of Unassisted Immigration to Victoria, 1852-1923(images unavailable)

‡ www.australia.gov.au/419

(p 342) The 1841 census return for Chelsea, St Luke, shows that William and Sarah still had their three youngest children at home:

Marlborough Street

William Tapson	*55-59*	*Carpenter*	*Not born in Middlesex*
William Tapson	*14*		*Born in Middlesex*
George Tapson	*8*		*Born in Middlesex*
Priscilla Tapson	*6*		*Born in Middlesex*
Sarah Tapson	*50-55*		*Not born in Middlesex*

In 1828 Sarah had appeared before the January Quarter Sessions held at Clerkenwell; she was bound over to keep the peace, William Tapson of *8 Cumberland Street* standing bail. And in 1834 William himself had appeared before the September Quarter Sessions held at Clerkenwell; he was bound over to keep the peace towards Sarah Tapson, his wife. The *Recognizance* issued by the court (GLRO MJ/RP/014/204) stated that:

> *William Tapson of 24 Oakham Street Chelsea, Carpenter, Acknowledges himself to be indebted to our Sovereign Lord the King in the Sum of Twenty Pounds Upon Condition that he the said William Tapson do keep the Peace and be of good Behaviour towards our Sovereign Lord the King and to all his Liege Subjects and especially towards Sarah his wife for the space of three months Then this Recognizance to be void or else to remain in full Force*
> *Taken and Acknowledged the Third Day of September One Thousand Eight Hundred and Thirty Four Before Me* *Wm A. A. White*

The previous year the second son of William and Sarah had appeared before the Berkshire Quarter Sessions; the court records seem not to have survived, but the Home Office *Convict Registers* (PRO HO27/46) have the entry:

NAME	AGE	WHEN CONVICTED	OFFENCE	SENTENCE
Edmund Tapson	*16*	*Epiphany Session 1834*	*Larceny*	*Transportation: 7 years*

In early times most criminal offences were punished either by death or by a fine and/or whipping. Transportation to America, introduced during the seventeenth century as a humane alternative to the death penalty, came to an end at the outbreak of the American Revolution in 1776. However, Captain James Cook had reached eastern Australia in 1770 and had claimed the continent for Britain; and on 13 May 1787 a fleet of 6 transport ships, 2 warships and 3 storeships set sail for Australia to found a new penal colony with 717 convicts, of which 48 died en route, arriving at Port Jackson in January 1788. Transportation was used only for the most serious offences after 1853, and formally abolished in 1867. Between 1788 and 1868 over 160,000 men and women convicts arrived in Australia and Tasmania. After 1844/5 prisoners were given their pardons as soon as their ship had cleared territorial waters.

Edmund Gregory Tapson was born, according to his baptismal certificate, on 16 August 1816, so he would have been 17 when convicted. His trial was briefly reported in the *Berkshire Chronicle* of Saturday 4 January 1834 (British Library Newspaper Library EW91):

> *J. BASS and E. TAPSON pleaded guilty to a charge of breaking and entering the house of JOHN HISCOTT, of Shinfield, with intent to steal. Seven years' transportation*

What brought Edmund to Berkshire? Shinfield village is less than four miles from the centre of Reading and less than six miles from Tilehurst, where William's sister Priscilla was married in 1829 (page 341); so Edmund may have been visiting, or living with, his aunt.

The *Convict Transportation Registers* (PRO HO11/9) have the entry:

NAME	WHERE CONVICTED	WHEN	TERM
Edmund Tapson	*Berks 2nd Session*	*31 Dec 1833*	*Seven year*

and the page is headed:

William Metcalf
240 V.D.L. 23 May 1834

Edmund's arrival in Van Diemen's Land is recorded in an index in the Archives Office of Tasmania:

NAME	ARRIVAL	SHIP	DEPARTURE	PORT
Edmund Tapson	*04 Sep 1834*	*William Metcalfe*	*23 May 1834*	*Portsmouth*

The *New South Wales and Tasmania, Australia Convict Musters 1806-1849* have the entries (in which *Edward* was obviously written in error for *Edmund*), for 1835 (PRO HO10/50):

POLICE NUMBER	NAME	SHIP	IN WHAT SERVICE
046	*Tapson Edward*	*W. Metcalfe*	*Public Works*

and for 1841 (PRO HO10/51):

046	*Tapson Edward*	*William Metcalfe*	*Captain Wood Snake Banks*

By the time of the 1841 muster Edmund would have been at the end of his seven-year sentence. An index of *Departures from Tasmanian Ports 1817-1867 (Incomplete)** includes:

		SHIP	DATE OF DEPARTURE	PORT OF DEPARTURE	WHERE BOUND
Tapson C.	*Passenger*	*Brankenmoor*	*23 Aug 1843*	*George Town*	*Isle of France*

The passenger has to be Edmund, and the *Isle of France* the *Île de France*, the former name of the British colony of Mauritius, the first port of call after leaving Australian waters and about a third of the way back to England. George Town is at the mouth of the river downstream from the port of Launceston, Tasmania. The *Brankenmoor* made regular sailings between Sydney/Launceston and London/Cork; a barque of 402 tons, its movements around this period, under Captain David Smith, as listed in Lloyd's Register,† give a good idea of the times involved in its voyages, which would depend on the weather and on the time spent at various ports of call:

1842	10 Feb	Arrives at Port Philip (from London)
	2 Aug	Arrives at Pernambuco (from Sydney)
	21 Sep	Arrives at Gravesend (from Port Philip)
	17 Oct	Sails from Gravesend (for Launceston)
	19 Oct	Arrives at Deal (from the River)
	27 Oct	Arrives at Cowes (from London)
	29 Oct	Sails from Cowes (for Australia)
	2 Nov	Arrives at Cork (from London)
	7 Nov	Sails from Cork (for Launceston)
	17 Nov	Sighted at Lat 51, Long 11 by the *Lady Huntley*
1843	13 Feb	Arrives at Cape Good Hope (from Cork)
	16 Feb	Sails from Cape Good Hope (for Launceston)
	4 Apr	Arrives at Launceston (from London via Cork)
	18 May	Sails from Launceston (for —) *sic*
	7 Jun	Arrives at Sydney (from Launceston)
	16 Jul	Sails from Sydney (for Launceston)
	23 Aug	Sails from Launceston/George Town (for Mauritius)
	18 Oct	Arrives at Mauritius (from Launceston)
	19 Nov	Sails from Mauritius (for Launceston)
	25 Dec	Arrives at Launceston (from Mauritius)
1844	13 Mar	Sails from Launceston (for London)
	16 Jul	Arrives off Penzance (from Launceston)
	21 Jul	Arrives at Gravesend (from Launceston)
	7 Sep	Sails from London (for Port Adelaide)

Port Philip Bay is Melbourne harbour. Pernambuco is Recife, Brazil; perhaps the Brankenmoor took this route in order to avoid particulary severe Northeast Trade Winds by taking advantage of the Southeast Trade Winds and the Benguela Current before swinging around in the western Atlantic to pick up the Westerlies and the Gulf Stream. Lloyd's dates are not always accurate because they rely upon reports often reaching London months after the event listed; and not all points of call are listed. Lloyd's, underwriters of marine insurance, was started in 1688 in a London coffee house by Edward Lloyd.

It is clear from the above listings why Edmund's destination was given as Mauritius rather than England: the Brankenmoor returned from Mauritius to Tasmania before setting out again on 13 March 1844 for the voyage all the way back to London. Edmund most probably took another ship from Mauritius to London, where he married Elizabeth Ann Johnson in 1847 (page 344).

* www.archives.tas.gov.au

† Guildhall Library, London

In 1845, soon after Edmund's return to England, his brother William Henry appeared before the January Quarter Sessions held at Clerkenwell. The *Indictment* (GLRO MJ/SR/4627 reads:

> *The Jurors for our Lady the Queen upon their Oath present, That William Tapson late of the Parish of Saint Luke Chelsea in the County of Middlesex, Laborer, on the Eighteenth Day of December in the Eighth Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lady Victoria, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland Queen, Defender of the Faith, with Force and Arms, at the Parish aforesaid, in the County aforesaid, one pair of Reins of the value of five shillings and one bridle of the value of fifteen shillings of the Goods and Chattels of George Ward, Then and There being found, feloniously did steal, take and carry away, against the Peace of our said Lady the Queen, her Crown and Dignity*

The verdict of the court is appended: *January Q^r. Sess: 1845 Jurors say guilty to be imprisoned and kept to hard labour in the Ho of Corr^n 6 cal mos 6 weeks solitary*. On the reverse of the parchment are named *George Ward, George Johnson, Henry Hill* with the words *Sworn in Open Court Tuesday 7th January 1845*

A year later, on 5 January 1846, William found himself before the Central Criminal Court. (A mediaeval courthouse destroyed in the Great Fire of London of 1666 had been replaced in 1673 by a new courthouse known as the *Old Bailey*, with jurisdiction over the City of London and Middlesex. In 1834, due to the expansion of London, its jurisdiction was extended to cover parts of Essex, Kent and Surrey, and it became known officially as the Central Criminal Court, though it is still commonly referred to as the *Old Bailey*.) William's *Indictment* (PRO CRIM4/290) reads:

> *The Jurors for our Lady the Queen upon their Oath present, That William Tapson late of the Parish of Saint Luke Chelsea in the County of Middlesex and within the Jurisdiction of the said Court, Laborer, on the Twentieth Day of December in the Ninth Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lady Victoria, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the Faith, with Force and Arms, at the Parish aforesaid, and within the Jurisdiction of the said Court Five handerchiefs of the value of Two shillings, Two shifts of the value of Two shillings, Two towels of the value of Sixpence, One Tablecloth of the value of Two shillings, One nightcap of the value of Sixpence, One flannel Jacket of the value of Two shillings, and One pocket of the value of One shilling of the Goods and Chattels of Eliza Taylor from the person of Richard Hoye then and there feloniously did steal, take and carry away, against the Peace of our said Lady the Queen, her Crown and Dignity. And the Jurors aforesaid, upon their Oath aforesaid, further present, that before the Felony aforesaid was done and committed in form aforesaid, to wit, At the General Quarter Session of the Peace held at the Session House on Clerkenwell Green in and for the County of Middlesex on Tuesday the Seventh day of January in the Eighth Year ot the Reign of her Present Majesty the said William Tapson was convicted of Felony*

The sentence is appended: *Puts himself Jury say Guilty To be transported beyond the Seas for the term of ten years*. The Home Office *Convict Registers* (PRO HO26/52) give William's age as 18 and describe his degree of instruction as *Imperfect*. If his date of birth given at the time of his baptism (page 334) was correct, William would have been 19 years old. The *Convict Transportation Registers* (PRO HO11/15) give the date of sentence as 5 January 1846.

Minutes of Evidence taken in shorthand at the trial by Henry Buckler (PRO CRIM10/23) quotes details of the charge against William, then continues:

> RICHARD HOYE: *I am seven years and five months old — I used to go to school, and I know the Lord's prayer — I know it is wicked to tell a lie — I live with my father, Richard Hoy, at Chelsea — my mother takes in washing — I took some linen home to a customer of hers, named Taylor, near Brompton-row — I had been there many times — I received a bundle of dirty linen to take home about half-past seven o'clock in the evening — as I went along the Fulham-road the prisoner and another boy spoke to me — they asked me if the bundle was heavy — I said, yes, it made my arms ache a little — the other boy took the bundle, and said to me, "Go and get a pennyworth of pudding" — the prisoner lent the other boy a penny, and he gave it to me — I went for the pudding and they went off with the bundle.*

PRISONER: *— He said the other boy took the bundle. A. Yes — the other took the bundle, and the prisoner gave the other boy the penny.*
COURT: *Q. Did you know the prisoner before? A. Yes, I have seen him a good many times — I did not know his name..*
MARY ANN HOYE: *I am the mother of this witness — I have a customer named Eliza Taylor — my child has been in the habit of going backwards and forwards to her with linen — he had been very careful hitherto — I never lost anything before this time — I sent him with some linen on the 20th of Dec. — he complained on his return that he had lost his bundle — I went to know what linen it was — I then went to the policeman, and he said, from the description, that he had no doubt it was Tapson — some rags have been shown to me by the policeman — I know them quite well — they are the two shifts and the other things mentioned — I could tell, in this state, that they are part of the linen I washed for Taylor — this is part of them.*
ANN HUNT: *I keep a rag and marine store-shop in Bond-street, Chelsea — on the evening of 20th of Dec. I saw the prisoner in company with another boy — the prisoner threw a bundle of rags into the scale, and my boy weighed them — they asked me what I gave for good linen rags — I said, 3d a pound — the rags weighed 3 lbs. — I gave 9d for them — they were the same that Mrs. Hoye has examined — I did not look at them before I paid for them — we very seldom look at them — they were not very clean, but we have an opposition shop against us, which made me give more for them than I should — they were not worth 9d as rags — they are torn up into rags — they look recently torn, as if torn on purpose to come to my shop — that raised my suspicion — the second boy came to ask me to buy some handkerchiefs — I did not buy them, and he ran away — I did not find any marks on this linen — I never looked — we put them with the other rags outside the counter — we have a boy to throw the dirty rags out of them, and about once a month or six weeks they go to be sorted, and are made into paper — these were not very clean — they must have been washed.*
ROBERT MITCHELL (police constable V181): *I received charge of the prisoner — I got the piece of linen from Mrs. Hunt — I went to her on the 24th and asked if she had had any dirty linen brought lately — she said two lads came in on the 20th and sold her some, and she had got them in a bin on the right side of the counter — I said, "This is what I want" — I asked her who she had bought them of — she gave me a description of the prisoner — Mrs. Hoye saw these things — she identified them, and they have the mark of E.T., which is still to be found on them.*
PRISONER'S DEFENCE: *What few things I sold her I picked up in a court close by her house.*
HENRY HILL (police constable B176): *I produce a certificate of the prisoner's former conviction at Clerkenwell — (*read *— Convicted 7th Jan. 1845, and confined six months, six weeks solitary) — he is the person.*
GUILTY Aged 18 — Transported for Ten Years

An index of *Assisted British Immigrants 1839-1871* lists:†

NAME	AGE	ARRIVAL DATE	SHIP
Tapson Wm	*18*	*Sep 1847*	*Joseph Somes*

The *Joseph Somes* arrived at Port Phillip (near Melbourne, Victoria) on 24 September 1847, having left Spithead (Portsmouth) on 4 June; a proportion of the convicts, including William Tapson, went on to nearby Geelong. An index of *Outward Passengers from Victoria* includes:†

NAME	AGE	DEPARTURE DATE	SHIP	DESTINATION
Tapson Wm	*28*	*Jan 1854*	*Westwind II*	*Adelaide*

The ages given for William in these two indexes are inconsistent; however, details for the voyage to Australia would probably have been supplied haphazardly by the prison authorities, whereas for the voyage to Adelaide William would himself have given details, including presumably his correct age.* The fact that his crime was committed in Chelsea makes it certain that he was William and Sarah's son William Henry, who would have been 28 years old on 21 May 1854 (*vide* page 342). In the trial records of the Central Criminal Court the occupation of the accused is, as here, usually given as *labourer*; but William is described as a *carpenter*, the same trade as his father, in the *Australian Convict Index 1788-1868*,‡ which also includes the information that he was single.

† www.access.prov.vic.gov.au/public ‡ www.ancestry.com * On this same voyage to Adelaide was John Tapson (*vide* page 385)

(p 344) Edmund Gregory's son Robert James would have been just about 19 years old when he was included in the 1871 census for Lincolnshire, Caistor, Grimsby:

Havelock St

Robert Tapson	*Boarder*	*Un*	*19*	*Labourer*	*London*

Robert James would have been only 38 or 39 in 1891, but his Lincolnshire address and his place of birth ensure that the entry in the 1891 census return for Lincolnshire, Caistor, refers to him:

Nettleton Road

Robert Tapson	*Lodger*	*Un*	*48*	*Dock Laborer*	*London, Chelsea*

Robert, who had added one or two years to his age in 1881 (*vide* page 344), has now added another seven or eight. The death was recorded (Lincoln R.D.) of *Robert Tapson, 57* in 1899, Q4; he was only 47.

And an entry in the 1871 census return for Chelsea, Old Church, probably refers to the elder brother of Robert James, Edmund William John, who would have been exactly 21 at the time:

11 Wellington Buildings

Edward Tapson	*Lodger*	*Un*	*21*	*Labourer*	*Middlesex, Brompton*

The district of Brompton merges into Chelsea.

(p 348) The 1891 census return for Battersea shows two of her sons still living with Rachael:

9 Sheepcott Lane

Rachael Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*56*	*Ironer*	*Kent, ?*
Charles Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*18*	*Woodcutter*	*London, Battersea*
Frederick Tapson	*Son*		*11*		*London, Battersea*

Rachael's eldest son, Edmund James, also appears in the 1891 census return for Battersea:

James Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*37*	*Firewood Cutter*	*London, Chelsea*
Emily Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*32*	*Firewood Cutter*	*Sussex, Brighton*
James Tapson	*Son*		*11*		*London, Chelsea*
Emily Tapson	*Dau*		*7*		*London, Battersea*
Rose Tapson	*Dau*		*3*		*London, Battersea*

The births had been registered (Wandsworth R.D.) of Emily Edith in 1884, Q2, and of Emily Rose in 1888, Q1; Elizabeth (born 1877, Q2, died 1878, Q3) and Walter (born 1886, Q3, died 1886, Q4) were also probably children of Edmund James and Emily. The death was registered (Wandsworth R.D.) in 1898, Q4, of *James Tapson 43*; this has to be Edmund James, who would have been 44 years old at that time and whose widow, Emily, was living in Wandsworth at the time of the 1901 census:

403 York Road

Emily Tapson	*Head*	*Wid*	*42*		*Sussex, Brighton*
James Tapson	*Son*	*Mar*	*22*	*Wood Cutter Sawyer*	*London, Chelsea*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*21*		*London, Battersea*
Emily Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*17*	*Wood Lier Cutter(?)*	*London, Battersea*
Rose Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*13*		*London, Battersea*
Jas Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*4M*		*London, Battersea*

James Henry Gregory Tapson, the son of Edmund James and Emily, born in 1879 and included in the 1881 census for Chelsea (page 348), would have been about 22 years old at the time of the 1901 census. In 1900, Q4, he had married Elizabeth Jane Cannadine; she is included in this return as James's wife, and *Jas Tapson* is their son, James Henry Gregory, whose birth was registered (Wandsworth R.D.) in 1901, Q1. Further children of James and Elizabeth were Catherine Elizabeth, *born on 31 Aug 1904 at 44 Sheepcote Lane, Battersea, daughter of James Henry Gregory Tapson, woodcutter (journeyman), and Elizabeth Jane Tapson, formerly Cannadine*,* and Ernest Lionel, *born on 23 Jan 1915 at 51 Weybridge Street, East Battersea, son of James Henry Gregory Tapson, Private East Surrey Regiment (Waterside Labourer), and Elizabeth Jane Tapson, formerly Cannadine*,* and probably also Thomas William (born 1902, Q3), Constance Caroline (1907, Q1), Henry Richard A. (1909, Q2), and Alfred L. G. (1912, Q3); Thomas William died in 1906, Q1, and Alfred L. G. in 1915, Q2; all these births and deaths were registered in the Wandsworth R.D.

Private 20003, Second Battalion Hampshire Regiment, James Henry Gregory Tapson died in action in France on Wednesday 9 Aug 1916, and was buried near Ypres at Potyze Burial Ground.

* From birth certificates provided by Shirley Hanlon, a descendant of James Henry Gregory Tapson

Included in the 1901 census for Wandsworth, East Battersea, are:

33 Rolle St

Charles Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*28*	*General Labourer*	*London, Battersea*
Winifred Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*21*		*London, Battersea*
Charles Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*4 mth*		*London, Battersea*

Charles Tapson married Winifred Harding in 1899, Q3, and the birth of Charles Henry was registered (Wandsworth R.D.) in 1900, Q4.

In 1901 Rachael and Frederick were living with their married sister Harriet and her family at London, Stoke Newington, where Frederick and Rachael were soon to marry (*vide* page 348):

12 Londesborough Road

Walter Vought	*Head*	*Mar*	*44*	*Baker*	*London, Hammersmith*
Harriet Vought	*Wife*	*Mar*	*34*		*London, Chelsea*
Harry Vought	*Son*	*Un*	*11*		*London, Lewisham*
Constance Vought	*Dau*	*Un*	*9*		*Middlesex, Billensden*
Catherine Vought	*Dau*	*Un*	*8*		*London, Hammersmith*
Harrold Vought	*Son*	*Un*	*3*		*London, Hammersmith*
Charles Vought	*Son*	*Un*	*2*		*London, Hammersmith*
Rachel Tapson	*Sister*	*Un*	*35*	*Domestic Servant*	*London, Chelsea*
Frederick Tapson	*Brother*	*Un*	*22*	*Baker*	*London, Battersea*

(p 349) Some information about James' army service can be found in War Office returns. The early part of his career is summarized in PRO WO121/186 (film image 735):

Her Majesty's First Royal Regiment of Veterans

These are to certify that James Tapson, Private, in Captain William Cartwright's company in the Regiment aforesaid, born in the Parish of St Pethorn in or near the Town of Launceston in the County of Cornwall was enlisted at the Age of Nineteen Years and hath served in the said Regiment for the Space of Threehundred and eighteen Days, as well as in other Corps, after the following Statement, but in Consequence of Disbandment is rendered unfit for further Service, and is hereby discharged ..... He is about twentyeight Years of Age, is five Feet six Inches in height, brown hair, grey eyes, brown Complexion, by trade a Labourer

Statement of Service

40th Foot		*7 yrs*	*334 days*
Out pension	*21 May 1815 to 10 July 1815*		*51 days*
1st Veteran Battalion	*11 July 1815 to 25 May 1816*		*318 days*
		8 yrs	*338 days*

A note, *Instructions to be addressed to Launceston, Cornwall*, indicates where his pension is to be paid. James would have been 28 years old in May 1816.

The later part of James' career is summarized in PRO WO121/195 (film image 404):

Third Regiment of Royal Veterans

This is to certify that Pte James Tapson, born in Lifton, Cornwall, was enlisted into the Third Regiment of Royal Veterans on 18 November at the age of 33 for life. That he hath served in the army for 11 yrs 174 days ..... He is about thirtyfour Years of Age, is five Feet six Inches in height, brown hair, grey eyes, brown Complexion, by trade a Labourer

Statement of Service

40th Foot		*8 yrs*	*275 days*
and had period in out Pension		*1 yr*	*315 days*
3rd Royal Vet Bt	*18 Nov 1819 to 26 Sep 1820*		*314 days*
		11 yrs	*174 days*

It would appear that James was entitled to a total pension of just two years.

(p 349) It would seem to be James's eldest son, James, listed in the 1841 census return for the parish of Werrington (PRO HO107/259/11 Fo. 8) in the household of a farmer, Thomas Bloyce, though James would have been 13 years old at the time; Colmans is only about two miles from Lifton village:

Colmans

Thomas Bloyce	*45-49*	*Farmer*	*Born in Devonshire*
.....			
James Tapson	*10*	*Ag Lab*	*Born in Devonshire*

The three sons of James and Elizabeth may have emigrated to Ontario. The 1851 census for *Oneida, Halimand County,* lists, in separate households:

William Tapson	*24*	*Ireland*	*Labourer*	*Methodist*
William Tapson	*22*	*England*	*Labourer*	*Episcopal Ch*

and the 1851 census for *Waterloo, Waterloo County*, includes:

John Topson	*20*	*England*	*Black Smith*	*Methodist*

Oneida is west of London and Waterloo is north-west. If they had been baptized soon after their births, these would have been the ages of the three sons of James and Elizabeth *on their next birthdays*, as specified in the census return. That they are the sons of James and Elizabeth rests on the assumption that the name and place of birth of the first entry were written in error; as far as is known there were no Tapsons in Ireland at this time.

The Lifton parish register records the baptism:

26 May 1839 Frederick Hambly, base child of Betsey Tapson, Lifton Village

Just under two years later Frederick was buried at Tavistock:

18 Feb 1841 Frederick Tapson Union House 2

The death certificate* states that the child was the son of Elizabeth Tapson, a widow, and that he died at Tavistock Workhouse on 17 February 1841 of *water on the head*. The evidence suggests that the child, born nearly four years after James's death, was the illegitimate son of his widow. At the time of the 1841 census, less than four months after Frederick's burial, there was no Elizabeth Tapson at Tavistock Workhouse, but James's widow was living at Lifton (*vide* page 349); perhaps *John Hamly*, her employer, was the father of her illegitimate child.

The birth was registered in 1844, Q2 at East Stonehouse of a Jane Tapson. Unfortunately the parish registers were destroyed during World War II (*vide* page 33), but the Tavistock parish register records the child's burial:

21 Aug 1844 Jane Tapson Union House infant

The death certificate* provides the information that Jane died at the Union Workhouse, Tavistock, aged 3 months, and that she was the daughter of *Betsey Tapson of Stonehouse, a single woman*. The cause of death was given as *pneumonia*.

The fact that the child died at Tavistock Workhouse suggests that Betsey came from that part of Devon, so she may have been James's second daughter, Elizabeth, who would have been about 24 years old when the child was born and perhaps, like her mother, answered to the name of *Betsey*. If so, it seems likely that she named the child after her younger sister, who had died in 1830 (page 349). [The eldest daughter of Ebsworthy Tapson of Launceston (page 208), who was actually christened *Betsey Ann*, was about 26 years old when Jane was born; she was living at home at the time of the 1841 census and was married in 1846. However, it is unlikely that the illegitimate child was hers, for Ebsworthy would almost certainly not have allowed his daughter to end up at Tavistock Workhouse with a sick child, whereas James's daughter had no family home, her widowed mother being in service. Moreover, James's daughter is known to have had (another) illegitimate child in 1853 (*vide* page 350).]

*Reported by Mrs. Pauline Johnson, Superintendent Registrar at Tavistock.

(p 350) James's widow, Elizabeth, may have been the Elizabeth Down listed in the 1851 census for Lifton as the wife of Thomas Down (PRO HO107/1884 Fo. 272):

Cawdron

Thomas Down	*Head*	*Mar*	*45*	*Ag Lab*	*Devon, Lifton*
Elizabeth Down	*Wife*	*Mar*	*55*		*Devon, Lifton*

James and Elizabeth had lived at Cawdron, and Elizabeth's age is about right, though she was born at Bratton Clovelly. It is certainly James's widow, however, who is included in the 1861 return for Lifton (PRO RG9/1464 Fo. 53):

Broad Street

Elizabeth Harry	*Head*	*Wid*	*68*	*Occupier of Land*	*Devon, Bradworthy*
Humphrey Harry	*Son*	*Un*	*26*	*Son*	*Devon, Lifton*
Mary Harry	*GdDau*	*Un*	*8*	*Scholar*	*Devon, Lifton*
Elizabeth Down	*Lodger*	*Wid*	*64*	*Nurse*	*Devon, Bratton Clovelly*

The 1891 census return for Exeter, St. Sidwell, lists:

11 Bishops Buildings

Edwin Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*37*	*Brass Finisher*	*Devon, Exeter*
Laura Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*33*		*Devon, Plymouth*
George E Tapson	*Son*		*10*		*Devon, Cullompton*
Ethel M Tapson	*Dau*		*8*		*Devon, Cullompton*
Beatrice M Tapson	*Dau*		*3*		*Devon, Cullompton*

The births of Ethel Mary and Beatrice Maud had been registered (Tiverton R.D.) in 1882, Q2, and 1887, Q3, respectively. It is likely that William Harvey, whose birth in 1883, Q3, and death in 1885, Q2, had both been registered in Tiverton R.D., was another child of Edwin and Laura.

The 1901 census return for Exeter, St. Thomas, has the entry:

17 Ebrington Road

Edwin Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*46*	*Brass Finisher*	*Devon, Exeter*
Laura Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*43*		*Devon, Plymouth*
George E Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*20*	*Brass Finisher*	*Devon, Cullompton*
Ethel M Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*18*	*Draper's Assistant*	*Devon, Cullompton*
Albertha F Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*8*		*Devon, Exeter*

The death of Beatrice Maud had been registered in 1892, Q2, in Exeter R.D., the same quarter as Alberta Florence's birth had been registered there.

At the time of the 1891 census return for Devon, Lifton, Mary's address was unchanged:

Mary Tapson	*Head*	*Un*	*72*	*Living on her own means*	*Devon, Bratton Clovelly*

(p 355) In 1901 Robert's widow was listed in the return for London, Hampstead:

32 Bel. Square

Ellen Tapson	*Boarder*	*Wid*	*67*	*London St. Olaves*

(p 357) John's daughters Mary, Susanna and Agnes all married copper miners (page 357), and they and their families continued to live in Lamerton parish. In 1851 the census for Lamerton shows George and Mary Williams at Heathfield, Susanna Gilbert, by this time a widow, at Blackdown, and William and Agnes Gill at South Brentor; both Mary and Susanna named Bridestowe as their birthplace, as did their sister Ann (page 357). This strong link with Bridestowe while John Tapson of Lamerton was living at Coryton strengthens the belief that he was Bridestowe #40 (*vide* page 356) and that the younger John Tapson, who also named Bridestowe as his birthplace in 1851 (*vide* page 358), was his son.

(p 358) John's brush with the law did not exclude him from appointment two years later in a law-enforcement rôle, for a list of (paid) constables appointed in 1848 (WDRO 1942/250) includes the entry:

John Tapson	*North Brentor*	*Farmer*

(p 358) The death certificate for John Tapson states that he died, aged 44 years, on 8 December 1852 of *Pneumonia 14 days*; he was described as a farmer of North Brentor, Lamerton.‡ After his death his widow, Ann, and their surviving children emigrated to Canada, where the 1861 census return for *Bowmanville, Durham West, Ontario*, has the entry:

	MARITAL STATUS	ETHNIC ORIGIN	AGE	BIRTH PLACE	OCCUPATION	RELIGION
Ann Tapson			*43*	*England*		
Mary Ann Tapson			*26*	*England*	*Spinster*	
Thomas Tapson			*22*	*England*	*Blacksmith*	
William Tapson			*19*	*England*	*Waggon Maker*	
Celia Tapson			*15*	*England*	*Servant*	
Elizabeth Tapson			*14*	*England*		

Bowmanville is on Lake Ontario to the east of Toronto. The ages given for the children are fairly accurate, but Ann has aged only six years since 1851!

The following Ontario marriages are recorded:

1 Feb 1862 *Northumberland & Durham County*

Isaac Westcott *30* *Residence: Darlington* *Born: England*
Parents: John & Mary Westcott

Mary Ann Tapson *26* *Residence: Darlington* *Born: England*
Parents: John & Ann Tapson

28 Mar 1864 *Northumberland & Durham County, Bowmanville Township*

Charles Hobbs *24* *Residence: Bowmanville* *Born: England*
Parents: James & Frances Mary Hobbs

Celia Tapson *19* *Residence: Bowmanville* *Born: England*
Parents: John & Ann Tapson

The census return of April 1871 for *Bowmanville, Durham West, Ontario* includes, in separate households, the names:

Thomas Tapson	*Head*	*English*	*29*	*England*	*Blacksmith*	*Wesleyan Methodist*
William Tapson	*Head*	*English*	*26*	*England*	*Carriagemaker*	*Bible Christian*

Thomas would have been 31 and William just 29. Family members were not included in this census; however, both Thomas and William were already married.

The 1881 census for *Bowmanville, Durham West, Ontario*, lists for Household 375:

Thomas Tapson	*Married*	*English*	*39*	*England*	*Blacksmith*	*Canadian Methodist*
Emma Tapson	*Married*	*English*	*32*	*England*		*Canadian Methodist*
Wm B Tapson		*English*	*10*	*Ontario*		*Canadian Methodist*

and for Household 113 (in which William gives his correct age):

William Tapson	*Married*	*English*	*39*	*England*	*Carriage Maker*	*Bible Christian*
Betsey A Tapson	*Married*	*English*	*35*	*Ontario*		*Bible Christian*
Flora G Tapson		*English*	*16*	*Ontario*		*Bible Christian*
Mary S Tapson		*English*	*13*	*Ontario*		*Bible Christian*
Ellen Tapson		*English*	*10*	*Ontario*		*Bible Christian*
Frank Tapson		*English*	*6*	*Ontario*		*Bible Christian*
John A Tapson		*English*	*<1*	*Ontario*		*Bible Christian*

and for Household 274:

Wm G Glover	*Married*	*Irish*	*35*	*Ontario*	*Mail Contract*	*Bible Christian*
Elizabeth Glover	*Married*	*English*	*33*	*England*		*Bible Christian*
Lottie E A Glover		*Irish*	*16*	*Ontario*		*Bible Christian*
Effa E I Glover		*Irish*	*10*	*Ontario*		*Bible Christian*
Gertrude L Glover		*Irish*	*1*	*Ontario*		*Bible Christian*
George Glover		*Irish*	*31*	*Ontario*	*Teamster*	*Bible Christian*
Ann Tapson	*Widow*	*English*	*66*	*England*		*Bible Christian*

‡ Information from Al & Ann Fice of Oshawa, Ontario; Al is a descendant of Susanna, daughter of John Tapson of Lamerton

Elizabeth, the youngest daughter of John and Ann, who married William George Glover, would have been 33 at the time of the 1881 census. Ann, John's widow, who would have been about 67 if she had given her age correctly in the U.K. census of 1851, was living with the Glovers in 1881. Ann's death is recorded in the *Bowmanville Statesman* of March 1901:‡

TAPSON — In Bowmanville, Mar. 17, 1901 Annie Rice relict of the late John Tapson age 87 years

and the Bowmanville Cemetery register has the entry for 20 March 1901:‡

Ann Rice Tapson age 87 Widow of John Tapson Born England Died Bowmanville March 17 1901 Buried March 20 1901

One of the Bowmanville Cemetery tombstones records the names:‡

WLLIAM G. GLOVER, born April 9, 1846, died Oct. 7, 1910
ELIZABETH TAPSON, his wife, born Dec. 14 1848, died Nov. 27, 1917
ANN TAPSON, born Feb. 14, 1814, died Mar 17, 1901

(Elizabeth's date of birth should have been given as 1847.)

The 1881 census for *Bowmanville, Durham West, Ontario*, lists for Household 41:

Isaac Wescott	*Married*	*English*	*50*	*England*	*Blacksmith*	*Christian Bretheren*
Mary A Wescott	*Married*	*English*	*45*	*England*		*Christian Bretheren*
John T Wescott		*English*	*16*	*Ontario*	*Blacksmith*	*Christian Bretheren*
Albert W Wescott		*English*	*14*	*Ontario*		*Christian Bretheren*
Harry Wescott		*English*	*13*	*Ontario*		*Christian Bretheren*
Harold I Wescott		*English*	*9*	*Ontario*		*Christian Bretheren*

Harry Wescott died of *Consumption* and was buried in Bowmanville Cemetery on 24 September 1882 aged 16.‡ Celia's family are included in the 1881 census return for *Oshawa, Ontario*, Household 19, (in which Celia should have given her age as 36):

Charles Hobbs	*Married*	*English*	*36*	*England*	*Woodturner*	*Christian Bretheren*
Cecelia Hobbs	*Married*	*English*	*35*	*England*		*Christian Bretheren*
Fanny Hobbs		*English*	*16*	*Ontario*		*Christian Bretheren*
May A Hobbs		*English*	*12*	*Ontario*		*Christian Bretheren*
Cecelia Hobbs		*English*	*9*	*Ontario*		*Christian Bretheren*
Harry Hobbs		*English*	*5*	*Ontario*		*Christian Bretheren*
Elizabeth Hobbs		*English*	*2*	*Ontario*		*Christian Bretheren*
Alfred Hobbs		*English*	*1/12*	*Ontario*		*Christian Bretheren*

The 1901 census for *Bowmanville, Durham West, Ontario*, records Thomas's household:

Thomas Tapson	*Married*	*Aug 1844*	*56*	*England*	*Blacksmith*	*Methodist*
Emma Tapson	*Married*	*Oct 1838*	*52*	*England*		*Methodist*

(Thomas was actually born in 1839) and William's household:

William Tapson	*Married*	*Feb 1842*	*59*	*England*	*Carriage Shop*	*Methodist*
Betsy A Tapson	*Married*	*July 1845*	*47*	*Ontario*		*Methodist*
John A Tapson	*Single*	*Dec 1880*	*20*	*Ontario*	*?*	*Methodist*
Annie R Tapson	*Single*	*Mar 1883*	*18*	*Ontario*		*Methodist*
Harold R Tapson	*Single*	*Apr 1887*	*14*	*Ontario*		*Methodist*

A tombstone in the Bowmanville Cemetery has the inscription:

THOMAS TAPSON 1843 — 1909
EMMA BASSETT, his wife, 1849 — 1933

Another tombstone (dates not very legible) has the inscription:

WILLIAM TAPSON, Feb. 27, 1842. Apr. 16, 1901(?)
His wife
BETSY ANN ROWE, July 5, 1845. Dec. 9, 1918
Their sons
HAROLD R, Apr. 12, 1886. Dec. 16, 1906
JOHN L, Mar. 9, 1866. Jan. 28, 1868
HAROLD P, Jan. 9, 1872. Jan. 18, 1878

‡ Information from Al & Ann Fice of Oshawa, Ontario

The son of Thomas and Emma was married in Ontario:

25 Nov 1890 Bowmanville, Durham County

Wm Bassett Tapson *20 Residence: Bowmanville Born: Bowmanville Piano Tuner*
Bachelor Methodist Parents: Thomas & Emma Tapson

Mary Louisa Beach *18 Residence: Bowmanville Born: Syracuse, NY*
Spinster Congregationalist Parents: Dexter B & Mary Beach

His second wedding took place just over ten years later:

30 Jan 1901 Peterborough, Peterborough County

Wm Bassett Tapson *30 Residence: Bowmanville Born: Bowmanville Piano Tuner*
Widower Parents : Thomas Tapson & Emma Bassett

Emma Shirlock *26 Residence: Peterborough Born: Peterborough*
Spinster Parents: Lucius Shirlock & Mary Ann Watt

The 1911 census for Durham, Bowmanville shows Emma and her son's family:

Emma Tapson	*Widow*	*Oct 1848*	*62*	*England*		*Methodist*

and, in the next household:

W B Tapson	*Married*	*May 1870*	*41*	*Ontario*	*Piano Factory*	*Methodist*
Emma Tapson	*Married*	*Aug 1877*	*36*	*Ontario*		*Methodist*
Louis Tapson	*Single*	*Jan 1890*	*21*	*Ontario*	*Piano Factory*	*Methodist*

Louis, a piano tuner like his father, was also married in Ontario:

25 Sep 1918 Bowmanville, Durham County

Louis Bassett Tapson *29 Residence: Bowmanville Born: Bowmanville Piano Tuner*
Bachelor Methodist Parents: William B Tapson & Mary Beech

Nora Ross *30 Residence: Bowmanville Born: Madoc Lives at home*
Spinster Anglican Parents: Sylvester Daniel Ross & Melissa Moon

Five children of William and Betsy were married at Bowmanville:

29 Oct 1886 Bowmanville, Durham County

Richard Hy Moses *27 Residence: Bowmanville Born: Ontario Mechanic*
Bachelor Methodist Parents: George & Elizabeth Moses

Flora Tapson *22 Residence: Bowmanville Born: Ontario*
Spinster Methodist Parents: William & Betsy Tapson

14 Nov 1888 Bowmanville, Durham County

William Chas Burden *24 Residence: Bowmanville Born: Bowmanville Cabinet Maker*
Bachelor Methodist Parents: Thomas & Helen Burden

Mary Susan Tapson *20 Residence: Bowmanville Born: Bowmanville*
Spinster Methodist Parents: William & Elizabeth Tapson

18 Jan 1893 Bowmanville, Durham County

William Hy Thickson *22 Residence: Bowmanville Born: Canada Labourer*
Bachelor Methodist Parents: John & Sarah Jane Thickson

Ellen B Tapson *20 Residence: Bowmanville Born: Canada*
Spinster Methodist Parents: William & Betsy Ann Tapson

13 Jul 1904 Bowmanville, Northumberland & Durham County

John Wm McDonald Tapson *23 Residence: Bowmanville Born: Bowmanville Piano Tuner*
Bachelor Parents: William Tapson & Betsy Rowe

Carrie Fletcher *24 Residence: Bowmanville Born: England*
Spinster Parents: John Fletcher & Betsy Cornish

10 Oct 1906 Bowmanville, Durham County

Harry Lorne Martyn *22 Residence: Bowmanville Born: Bowmanville Merchant*
Bachelor Methodist Parents: John Brown Martyn & Elizabeth Hooper

Annie Rowe Tapson *23 Residence: Bowmanville Born: Bowmanville Dressmaker*
Spinster Methodist Parents: William Tapson & Betsy Rowe

In the 1900 US Federal Census for *Erie, New York*, the family of William Haller includes:

Otilia Tapson	*24*	*New York*	*Dau*	*Married*	
Frank Tapson	*25*	*Canada*	*Son-in-law*	*Married*	*House Painter*

The age given for Frank is consistent with that given in the 1881 census for Bowmanville for the son, born in Canada, of William and Betsy. Frank and his family are listed in the 1910 US Federal Census for *Erie, New York*:

Frank Tapson	*34*	*Canada*	*Head*	*Married*	*Finisher (Car Shop)*
Tillie Tapson	*34*	*New York*	*Wife*	*Married*	
Harold Tapson	*9*	*New York*	*Son*		
Cora E Tapson	*6*	*New York*	*Dau*		
Amelia Haller	*18*	*New York*	*Sister-in-Law*	*Single*	*Seamstress (Dept Store)*

Harold Tapson appears again in the 1920 US Federal Census for *Summit County, Ohio*:

Harold Tapson	*20*	*New York*	*Lodger*	*Single*	*Musician (Orchestra)*

The families of both Thomas and William produced piano tuners; now an orchestral musician takes to the New York stage.

(p 360) In 1861 a census return was made from H.M.S. Mars at Palermo Bay (Sicily):

William Tapson	*Boatswain*	*Mar*	*50*	*Devon, Two Bridges*

Two Bridges was a tiny, remote hamlet right at the centre of Dartmoor, some 10 miles by road from Tavistock and 1½ miles from Dartmoor Prison (Princetown). So it is very probable that William was baptized at Tavistock, the nearest place of any size, and was therefore the son of John Tapson, Labourer (*vide* page 360), and so quite likely the grandson of Elizabeth Tapson, Bridestowe #34. [Another William Tapson was also included in this census return from H.M.S. Mars (*vide* page 202). One can but speculate on whether, in spite of their difference in age and rank — one would have been 18 and an assistant ship's steward, the other 48 and a warrant officer — they got to know each other and realized they were related.]

(p 362) William's household appears in the 1871 census return for Wolborough, Newton Abbot:

South Devon Cottages

William Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*58*	*Retired Chief Boatswain RN*	*Devon, Two Bridges*
Mary Ann Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*52*		*Devon, Plymouth*
Wm J Tapson	*Son*		*16*	*Railway Engine Fitter*	*Devon, Plymouth*
Emily Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*17*		*Kent, Chatham*

William, the son of John Tapson, Labourer, would have been 58 at the time of this census.

(p 363) No death seems to have been registered for William John Tapson Senior in England or Wales, but his family appear in the 1891 census return for Devon, Stoke Damerel:

93 James St.

George Black	*Head*	*Mar*	*30*	*Blacksmith*	*Devon, Devonport*
Bessie Black	*Wife*	*Mar*	*36*		*Devon, Newton Abbot*
William J Tapson	*Stepson*		*14*	*Scholar*	*Devon, Devonport*
Percy Tapson	*Stepson*		*12*	*Errand-boy*	*Kent, Chatham*

However, George Black and Bessie Marie Tapson were not married until 1892, Q3, at Stoke Damerel.

The passenger list of the *Trinidad*, which arrived at New York from Hamilton, Bermuda, on 13 December 1904, includes:

William Tapson 28 Single English Engine Fitter Last Residence: Bermuda
Final Destination: New York for .... to England Not been in U.S. before
To join relative at 42 St Albans St, Devonport, Devon, England

William John Tapson Junior was exactly 28 years old at the time and single, and died in 1918 at his home, *60 St Aubyn Street, Devonport* (*vide* page 363); it seems that he had become an engine fitter like his father. Several passengers on that voyage were engine fitters returning to England, and others were divers or had allied boat-building trades, so it would appear that they had been carrying out a major refit in Bermuda.

The 1901 return for Devonport includes:

15 Park Street

Percy Tapson	*Boarder*	*Un*	*22*	*Blacksmith*	*Devon, Stoke*

Percy probably never knew he was born at Chatham, because soon after his birth the family returned to Devon. He would have been very nearly 49 when the death was registered (Newport R.D., Monmouthshire) in 1927, Q1, of *Percival Tapson, aged 49*.

(p 368) The 1871 census return for Devon, East Stonehouse, shows Christopher already living with his aunt and her son and two daughters:

2 Little Durnford St.

Elizabeth Crump	*Head*	*Wid*	*35*	*Laundress*	*Devon, Plymouth*
Christopher Tapson	*Nephew*		*6*	*Scholar*	*Cornwall, Millbrook*

(p 369) The 1901 return for Devon, E Stonehouse has the entry:

34 Emma Vale

Christopher Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*36*	*Factory Manager Clothier*	*Cornwall. Millbrook*
Emily G Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*32*		*Devon, Stonehouse*
Dorothy C Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*4*		*Devon, Stonehouse*

(p 375, MISCELLANEOUS CENSUS RETURNS) The 1880 United States Federal Census for *Altamont, Effingham County, Illinois*, has the entry:

NAME	AGE	PLACE OF BIRTH	RELATION TO HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD	MARITAL STATUS	OCCUPATION
John Tapson	*40*	*England*	*Head*	*Married*	*Farmer*
Julia Tapson	*28*	*Missouri*	*Wife*	*Married*	*Milliner*
Julia Pfinegar	*60*	*Switzerland*	*Mother*	*Widow*	*Does housework*
Mary Vay	*16*	*Illinois*	*Ward*	*Single*	*Milliner*

The identity of this John remains in doubt; if his marriage certificate could be found it might settle the question by naming his father. The only John Tapson whose birth was registered in England in 1840 (thus being of exactly the right age) was Bridestowe #90a, son of Ebsworthy and Mary; but he was married at Stepney on 23 November 1879 (p 395) and died in 1887 Q1. John Henry Tapson, son of John Tapson of Bishopsteignton (p 290), born on 28 Oct 1843, would have been 36 on 1 June 1880, the date of the U.S. census; and John Tapson, son of James Tapson of Lifton (pages 349, 428), baptized on 26 August 1832, would gave been about 48; both seem to have left England as young men.

The 1900 US Federal Census shows the family living at *Mound, Effingham County, Illinois*:

NAME	AGE	PLACE OF BIRTH	RELATION TO HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD	MARITAL STATUS	OCCUPATION
John Tapson	*49*	*England*	*Head*	*Married*	*Farmer*
Julia Tapson	*44*	*Missouri*	*Wife*	*Married*	*Milliner*
Julia Pfenniger	*80*	*Switzerland*	*Mother-in-law*	*Widow*	
Milli Tapson	*14*	*Illinois*	*Daughter*	*Single*	*At school*
Fannie Pfenniger	*17*	*Illinois*	*Niece*	*Single*	*At school*

John died on 5 December 1906 at Altamont; his age was given as 66. John's widow and daughter are included in the 1910 US Federal Census return for *Mound, Effingham, Illinois*:

NAME	AGE	PLACE OF BIRTH	RELATION TO HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD	MARITAL STATUS	OCCUPATION
Julia Tapson	*53*	*Missouri*	*Head*	*Widow*	*Millinery*
Milli Tapson	*23*	*Illinois*	*Daughter*	*Single*	*Millinery*
Julia Pfenniger	*89*	*Switzerland*	*Mother*	*Widow*	
Elizabeth Mahler	*22*	*Germany*	*Servant*	*Single*	*House servant*

APPENDIX VII FURTHER ADDENDA

(p 110 and earlier Addendum) The bishop's transcripts for 1616 of the parish of Bickleigh, immediately to the south of Buckland Monachorum, record the baptism:

Roberte the sonne of Roberte Tapson was baptized the third day of November

(p 113) The mention of Robert's wife *Margeria* and *Johanna Phillipp* is a vival piece of evidence. The following entries are recorded in the Buckland Monachorum parish register:

MARRIAGE:	*13 Dec 1586*	*Johannes Philpe and Margeria Sprye*
BURIAL:	*16 Sep 1587*	*Johannes Philpe de Frisebeare*
BAPTISM:	*2 Oct 1587*	*Johanna Philpe filia Johannis*

It is now clear that Robert married the recently widowed Margery Phillip (née Spry) a fortnight after the baptism of her daughter Joan, thereby gaining not only a wife but also a step-daughter and the leasehold of Freeesabeare, previously held by John Phillip.

(p 150 and earlier Addendum) Mary (#90), the eldest daughter of Ebsworthy and Mary, was baptized on 11 February 1838 (p 131). The only Mary born in Bridestowe in 1838 (±2 years) indexed in the 1861 census was in the return for Plymouth St Andrew:

8 St Michael's(?) Tenement

Mary Tapscott	*Servant*	*23*	*Bridestowe*

This is the correct age and birthplace for the daughter of Ebsworthy and Mary, but the wrong name! However, the only *Mary* whose birth was registered in Bridestowe between 1 July 1837, when civil registration began (p 148), and 31 December 1839 was Mary Tapson; certainly no birth was registered of a Mary Tapscott. The conclusion must be that her employer gave the wrong name for his servant girl. Ebsworthy and Mary, with their children John, Ellen and Susan, were already living in Plymouth by 1861 (p 149) and Anne was married there in 1869 (p 150), so it would be a reasonable assumption that the whole family moved there at the same time, including Mary.

Mary was married at St Stephen, Paddington:

30 Oct 1867	***John Major***	*Full*	*Bachelor*	*Soldier*	*27 Talbot Terrace*
				(Father:	*Benjamin Major, Labourer)*
	Mary Tapson	*Full*	*Spinster*		*27 Talbot Terrace*
				(Father:	*Ebsworth Tapson, Labourer)*

The witnesses' names are not legible. Mary, John and Ellen had all moved to London in the 1860s.

(p 188 and earlier Addendum) The *Indictment Files* (PRO ASSI/25/31/1) for the Western Circuit Assizes (Cornwall) of 1844 have the entry:

The Jurors for our Lady the Queen upon their Oath present that John Tapson late of Bodmin in the County of Cornwall Labourer and Thomas Yeo late of the same place Labourer on the twenty sixth day of February in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and forty four with force and arms at Bodmin aforesaid in the County aforesaid one silver watch of the value of three pounds of the Goods and Chattels of Henry Hender then and there being found then and there feloniously did steal and take away and carry away Against the peace of our said Lady the Queen her Crown and Dignity Verdict appended: *Guilty 6 mth*

That this was William Tapson's son, John George, is clear from the *Minutes of Evidence* (PRO CRIM10) of the trial of the same John Tapson at the Central Criminal Court *(Old Bailey)* along with John Beard on 11 May 1846, on a charge of *theft > simple larceny*, which begins:

JOHN TAPSON and JOHN BEARD were indicted for stealing 1 portmanteau, value 5s.; 2 gowns, 6l.; 1 cloak, 3l. 10s.; 1 purse, 6d.; 2 shifts, 9s.; 1 night-gown, 5s.; 1 night-cap, 2s.; 3 pairs of stockings, 6d.; 2 handkerchiefs, 3s. 6d.; 2 slips, 5s.; 1 pair of gloves, 1s.; 2 pairs of trowsers, 4s.; 9 caps, 1l. 2s. 6d.; 1 scarf, 4s.; ¾ yard of velvet, 10s; 1 dressing-case, 5s.; 2 razors, 10s.; 1 strop, 3s.; 1 tooth-brush, 1s.; 2 combs, 3s. 6d.; and 2 hair-brushes, 6s. 6d.; the goods of the Great Western Railway Company; and that Tapson had been previously convicted of felony. [For younger readers: *l* and *s* are abbreviations for *pound* and *shilling*.]

The portmanteau was the property of Sarah Williams, who stated that she had travelled from Gloucester to Paddington with her father; the portmanteau had been placed in the luggage-box. The *Minutes of Evidence* (printed notes of proceedings taken in shorthand by the court reporter) continue:

MARY ELIZABETH WEATHERDON: *I am the daughter of Robert Weatherdon, of Palace New-road, Lambeth — he is a tailor. I knew the prisoner Tapson at Launceston, in Cornwall — I had a very slight knowledge of him — I had seen him when I was there with some friends — about a week before the 31st of March he came to my father's house — he said he had seen me at my friends', and came to let me know how they were — he asked if we could recommend him a lodging — we said he might have a bed at our house, and he stopped — on Tuesday, the 31st of March, he said he was going out, and would take my little brother, and bring him home in the evening; that he was going to meet my cousins, who live at Launceston, and were coming by the railway, and he should bring them to our house — I was not aware they were coming up — their name is May — he went out with my little brother, Edwin, a little after ten o'clock — I did not see him again till a quarter past ten o'clock at night — I went out in the afternoon, and returned at a quarter past ten — Tapson was then up stairs at my father's house, and the prisoner Beard was down in the kitchen — my brother Edwin was at home — Tapson came down stairs in about a quarter of an hour — he said he could not get the key to fit his box, and he should be obliged to cut it — he had got a knife before I came home — he said this in Beard's presence, and Beard asked if he had got any cream — he said no, they had not sent anything of the kind — he had cut the box open then — when Tapson was up stairs Beard said he wished he would make haste and come down, for he wanted to get home — he remained about a quarter of an hour after that in the kitchen — a few words passed, and then he left — he said as he left that he should try to get Tapson in to hear the trials at this Court next morning — Beard was quite a stranger to me before — I am sure he is the person.*

Cross-examined by MR. PARRY: *Q. I believe Tapson's father is a very respectable man in Cornwall? A. Yes — he was at his father's — I know he has property there himself — I had some reason to expect Mr. May and one of my cousins, in town — Tapson knew him — Tapson had told me he expected his luggage from Cornwall — he brought none with him, it was somewhere down at Woolwich — a few days after he came to our house he showed a letter from his father, and said he expected some things up, and he rather thought it would be some cream — he did not mention anything but cream — he promised to let us have some — my brother is eight years old — he is a sharp boy — my cousins came to town next day, and are in town — they do not reside with us — I see them constantly*

Cross-examined by MR. BALLANTINE: *Q. I believe you had never seen Beard before that day? A. No, nor after , till he was in custody .....*

MR CLARKSON: *Q. Did you hear from Tapson that he had been living for three months before at Woolwich, before he came to you? A. Yes — he never mentioned wearing apparel or anything, but cream coming from his father — I know his father very well, but know nothing of him.*

EDWIN WEATHERDON: *I am eight years old, and live with my father at Palace New-road, Lambeth — I went out with Tapson on Tuesday the 31st of March, in the morning — I remember going to a place where there is a large archway — Tapson took me to the Ship public-house, near the archway — we staid out all day — he changed a coat at the Ship — he took me to Covent-garden market — we left there about four or five o'clock — Tapson took a cab, and we went in it to Mr. Beard's, which is a large coachmaker's-yard or place — I do not know where — the prisoner Beard was there — we staid there a quarter of an hour — Beard came away with us — we went to a beer-shop, and had something to drink — Beard came away with us — he said, "I will go with you" — we left the beer-shop — after I left I became sick in the cab from the drink — they walked a little way from the beer-shop, then got into a cab, and rode to the Great Western Railway — they talked together as they went — I do not know what they said — we all got out at the railway, and the cab waited for us — we staid there about half an hour — I saw Davey and Myers the porters there — the prisoners spoke to them — they had some beer together in the lamp-room at the railway — when the train came up, Beard called out May, May, several times — Tapson was then up higher, picking out*

the portmanteau — I was with him — Beard was two or three carriages off — Tapson picked the portmanteau from one of the carriages, and said to me, "Come, take hold of it a little way," which I did, and he held the other end — we carried it to Beard — then he took hold of it, and they carried it to the cab which was waiting outside — they put it into the cab, we all got in, and rode to the New Inn, Edg-ware-road — they got out, and went into the beer-shop, drank something, and then came out again — then we all rode home to my father's house at Lambeth — they came in together —the servant took the portmanteau in — the coachman told her to do it — she took it down stairs, and put it by the kitchen door — it was such a portmanteau as the one produced — when the cab man was gone, Tapson took the portmanteau up stairs into his room, and then I went to bed — I showed Collard the different places I recollected Tapson to have gone to that day.

[Joseph Collard was superintendent of the Great Western Railway police.] Edwin Weatherdon was then cross-examined by Mr. Parry, Mr. Ballantine and Mr. Clarkson; and Elizabeth Curtis, the Weatherdon's servant, gave evidence, as did Joseph Davey (a constable of the Great Western Railway) and John William Myers (a porter), whom the prisoners had joined in the lamp-room for a glass of ale; both were cross-examined by Mr. Parry. Then:

WILLIAM AYRES: *I am shopman to Mr. Foyle, a pawnbroker, in the Westminster-road. On Wednesday, the 1st of April, a few minutes after seven o'clock, the prisoner Tapson came to the shop, and brought a satin dress, a black satin pelisse, with a cape to it — I valued them at from 8l. to 10l. — he asked me for 16s. on them — that created my suspicion — I asked him whose they were — he said they were his own, that a young woman gave them to him a fortnight ago — I asked him where he lived — he said at Gravesend — I asked him the reason of his coming all the way from Gravesend with them — he said he slept with a friend in Red Lion-street the night before — I asked him the reason he came all the way from Red Lion-street, Holborn — he said he came with his friend to Charing-cross, and just came over the bridge to pledge them — I said I should be justified in detaining them till I inquired further into it — he said something about law to me, and I sent the boy after a policeman — he went away before the policeman arrived, leaving the things — when the policeman came he went after the prisoner, but could not find him, and about half-past nine, or a quarter to ten, the prisoner returned — I asked why he left the things behind him — he said he had been to acquaint a friend of the circumstances he was placed in, as he did not wish to be locked up — the boy was gone after a policeman then the second time — Tapson was talking to Mr. Foyle, and said a young woman gave them to him the day before to pledge for her — she had come out of the country, and spent more money than she ought to have done, having been seeing the gaieties of London, and he being a friend, she gave them to him to pledge for her — Radford, the officer, came in and took him.*

THOMAS WILLIAM RADFORD (police-constable L52): *On Wednesday, the 1st of April, I went to Foyle's shop, in the Westminster-bridge-road, and saw a satin dress, a polka, and a cape there — I went a second time, and saw the prisoner Tapson there — I asked him where he had got the dresses from — he said he had got them from a Miss Cater — I asked where Miss Cater lived — he said St. John's Wood — I said, "St. John's Wood is a large place, can you tell me the name of the street, or the number?" — he said he could not — I took him to the station — he stated there that he slept with Miss Cater's brother the previous night — I asked him where Mr Cater resided — he said in a court leading from St. Paul's down the hill, he could not tell exactly where — he gave me the name of the court — I found out No. 4, Stationer's-court — I made inquiry there, returned, and told the prisoner all he had told me was false — he made some answer to that, I do not recollect what — I searched him, and found a green silk purse, 2l. 3s., a fourpenny piece, and 14½d. in copper, three duplicates, a pair of silk stockings, a pair of black silk gloves, and some papers, with the name of "Mr Weatherdon, 16, Palace New-road," on one of them, and "Mr Beard, 77 Basinghall-street," on another — I went to Palace New-road, and received the portmanteau which I have produced today — I found it empty, except a scarf in it — the lock was as it is now, as if cut with a knife — some days afterwards, in consequence of what I heard I went to the Great Western Railway station, and accompanied Collard to No. 77, Basinghall-street, and there found*

the prisoner Beard — Collard took him into custody, and brought him out of the house — I accompanied him in a cab to the station — when he was in the cab he asked Mr. Collard what his charge was — Collard informed him he was charged with Tapson with stealing a portmanteau from the Great Western Railroad — he said he could bring four or five witnesses to prove he was not out of Basinghall-street that night — Mr. Collard had mentioned the day to him — he denied all knowledge of Tapson — he said he knew nothing at all of him whatever — we found one of these duplicates related to the property stolen — we all went to Weatherdon's together, and Beard denied all knowledge of having been there before.

Under cross-examination by Mr. Ballantine, Radford confirmed that Beard later admitted to recognizing the house and to recollecting Tapson. Evidence was taken from Robert Weatherdon.

FRANCIS JAMES HARRISON: *On the 31st of March I was in the service of Whistler and Edwards, pawnbrokers, in the Strand. On Wednesday, the 1st of April, the prisoner Tapson came about eight or half-past eight o'clock in the morning — our house is about a mile from the Westminster-road — he brought a bundle — I believe this to be the same — here is a muslin dress, three pairs of drawers, two pairs of stockings, ten caps, a shift, a night-dress, a large worked, velvet stool-cover, and two pockets — he offered them in pledge — I asked him who they belonged to — he said they belonged to a female in the hospital; I think he said Guy's, and he wished to pledge them for her — I offered him 6s. on them — we reckon the value about 7s. 6d. or 10s. — they are not worth 4l. or 5l to us; they might be to this lady — I lent him 6s. on them — he said it was merely for safety he wished to leave them, and the smallest sum he had would be sufficient — we have frequent occurrences of the same sort; gentlemen will leave 20l. of plate for 5s.*

Giving evidence against Beard, Joseph Collard, superintendent of the Great Western Railway police, revealed that he searched him and

found a piece of paper with the name of Tapson upon it; it is on the back of a letter, with "Mr. John Tapson, Royal Marine mess, Woolwich" — it is addressed to him. "Mr. John Beard, No. 77, Basinghall-street" — I have been to Woolwich, and found there was a Mr. John Tapson, an uncle of the prisoner's.

[The name of John's uncle who was stationed at Woolwich at the time was in fact Christopher Tapson (*vide* page 199).] A statement made by the prisoner Tapson before a magistrate was then read out:

Beard said that he had some keys, and he thought he could unlock it; I fell asleep in the cab; I never had the watch or money; I plead guilty of taking it, and after I opened it, I did not know what to do with the things.

After further cross-examination about Beard's character, Collard stated:

*I produce a certificate of Tapson's former conviction, from Mr. Sidney Gurney, clerk of Assize for the Western Circuit — (*read *— Convicted 26th Feb., 1844, and confined six months.)*

PETER HENRY RICHARDS: *I am one of the police of Cornwall. I was present at the trial of Tapson, in March, 1844 — he is the person referred to in the certificate*

TAPSON—GUILTY. Aged 23. — Recommended to mercy. — Transported for Seven Years.
BEARD—NOT GUILTY

John Tapson would have been 24 years old at the time of the Old Bailey trial. The Home Office *Criminal Entry Books* contain copies of out-letters, warrants and pardons; among this correspondence relating to prisons and convicts for 1846 (PRO HO13/88) is the following (page 157):

(To) *S of London & Midd^{x}* *To remove* (here follows a list of names including *Jn Tapson*) *from Newgate*

(To) *Gov^{r} Millb^{k} P^{n}* *To Receive the above* *23 May 1846*

Newgate prison, close to the Old Bailey, was London's main prison for 500 years; it was originally built with money donated by Dick Whittington; new buildings, begun in 1770 and completed 1782 after partial destruction by the Gordon Rioters in 1780, were demolished in 1902. Public hangings, previously carried out at Tyburn (near Marble Arch), took place in front of the prison from 1783 to 1868, when the last public hanging in Britain took place on 26 May. Millbank Penitentiary, the largest prison in Britain during the nineteenth century, was replaced by the Tate Gallery, opened in 1897.

The *Criminal Transportation Register* PRO HO11/15/87 lists the convicts transported to Van Diemen's Land on the *Maitland* on 22 June 1846, but John Tapson was not one of them, nor does his name appear on later lists of convicts transported to Australia. However, an entry for 22 June 1846 in the *Criminal Entry Book* PRO HO13/88 refers to a proposal for sending the ship *Adelaide* to Bermuda *and for establishing an additional Hulk in that Colony for 300 prisoners at Millbank*. A letter of 24 June 1846 to the *Inspectors of Millbank Prison* says that *the Adelaide will be at Woolwich on 1 July ready to receive 300 male convicts for conveyance to Bermuda*. Unfortunately, lists of names of convicts transported to Bermuda (and Gibraltar) have not survived, but it would seem that John Tapson was one of the three hundred transported on the *Adelaide*, since there is no record of his having petitioned for clemency.

It is interesting that John's father should have included him in the 1851 census return for Launceston (*vide* page 188), though significantly no occupation is given for him; in 1841 this was given as *Plasterer* (*vide* page 187). The next we hear of John Tapson is his unassisted immigration into Victoria in January 1853 on the *St George* (*vide* earlier Addendum). Lloyd's Register of Shipping has many gaps around this period; the only entries relating to this voyage of the St George (which had arrived at back Gravesend from Sydney on 6 August 1852) are:

1852	4	Oct	St George, Captain Cowley, arrives at Plymouth (from London) for Melbourne, NSW
	6	Oct	St George, Captain —— , sails from Plymouth for Port Philip
	9	?	St George, London to Port Philip, sighted on the 9th 14N 33W
	28	Dec	The St George from London to Port Philip struck on a reef at Port Philip Heads 28 Dec and was put on shore, the water was flowing in and out of her; crew and passengers saved.
		?	The St George from London which struck at the Heads and was run on the Sand Bank inside the Channel on the 28th Dec has ben brought up to Hobson's Bay with but little damage to the vessel; her cargo has been mostly saved. New York 20 June

News of the disaster on 28 December did not reach London until just before 16 March 1853, when it was published by Lloyds; the journey from Plymouth to Port Philip had taken twelve weeks, and it was about eleven weeks later before the news was brought to London, presumably by another ship just returned from Port Philip. The month of the transfer of the St George to Hobson's Bay is not given by Lloyd's, but the news, arriving via New York, was not published in London until 4 July 1853. Clearly John's voyage ended in some excitement.

The sighting at 14N 33W was published by Lloyd's on 18 December 1852; the month of the sighting was not mentioned, but it must have been November; this would have allowed five weeks for the St George to reach this position from Plymouth and another five weeks for the ship which sighted her to reach England. The position 14N 33W is south-west of the Cape Verde islands and on the direct route from Plymouth to Pernambuco (Recife, Brazil), a port of call of the *Brankenmoor* in 1842, from which it took about seven weeks for that ship to reach England (*vide* earlier Addendum). So it is likely that the *St George* called at Recife to revictual before crossing the South Atlantic to the tip of South Africa. If that is the case it may be that John joined the ship there, having already made his way from Bermuda; presumably his sentence would not have ended before 11 May 1853, seven years from the date of his conviction, and, although he would have been been given his pardon after leaving British territorial waters, he would not have been allowed to return to Britain until then; however, he would have been free to travel anywhere else.

Port Phillip Bay (as it is now spelt) is the great harbour of Melbourne, the capital of Victoria State. Melbourne was first settled in 1835 and developed rapidly with the discovery of rich goldfields in 1851. So John spent a year at an exciting time in this fledgling city.

(p 248 and earlier Addendum) Horace William Tapson appeared before the Central Criminal Court on 23 April 1912; the *Indictment* (PRO CRIM4/1325) reads:

> *The Jurors for our Lord the King, upon their Oath present, That Horace William Tapson on the thirtieth day of January in the Year of our Lord One Thousand nine Hundred and twelve at the Parish of Lee in the County of London — did unlawfully and knowing falsely pretend to Charles Wells Blackall that a certain paper writing which he the said Horace William Tapson then produced and delivered to the said Charles Wells Blackall purporting to be a Banker's cheque and order drawn by A.W. Kerswell upon the Hither Green Branch of the London and Provincial Bank Limited for payment to H. Tapson of the sum of Fourteen pounds fifteen shillings and ten pence was then a good and valid order for the payment of the said amount That the said A. W Kerswell then had authority to make and issue a cheque and order upon the said Bank for payment of the said amount and that the said Horace William Tapson had then been sent by William John Tapson of The Cottage Vanbrugh Park, Blackheath in the said County of London to ask the said Charles Wells Blackall to exchange the said cheque. By means of which said false pretences the said Horace William Tapson did then and there unlawfully and fraudulently obtain of and from the said Charles Wells Blackall certain money to wit to the amount of Eight pounds with intent to cheat and defraud. Whereas the said paper writing was not then a good or valid order for payment of the said sum of Fourteen pounds fifteen shillings and ten pence nor had the said A.W. Kerswell then any authority to make or issue a cheque or order upon the said Hither Green Branch of the said Bank for the payment of any money and whereas the said Horace William Tapson had not then been sent by the said William John Tapson to the said Charles Wells Blackall to ask him to change the said cheque as he the said Horace William Tapson well knew at the time when he did so falsely pretend as aforesaid, Against the form of the Statute in such Case made and provided, and Against the Peace of our said Lord the King, his Crown and Dignity. And the Jurors aforesaid, upon their Oath aforesaid, do further present, That before the misdemeanour aforesaid was done and committed in form aforesaid, the said HoraceWillliam Tapson was convicted of a crime to wit the offence of obtaining money by false pretences to wit at the General Quarter Session of the Peace holden at Lewes in and for the County of Sussex on the twenty first day of June in the Year of our Lord one Thousand nine Hundred and four in the name of William Tapson*

The verdict is appended:

> *Confesses to all. 9 months hard labour Wandsworth Prison*
> *Convicted and Sentenced 24 April 1912*

On the reverse of the indictment document appears:

Name of Prosecutor:	*Charles Wells Blackall of 29 Leahurst Road, Lewisham*
Name of Counsel:	*Mr Joyce(?) Thomas No solicitor of the Prosecutor*
Witnesses:	*Charles Wells Blackall*
	Thomas Daniel Short
	Ernest William Higgins
	Harold Percival Tapson
	Ernest John Tapson
	Arthur Harvey
	Henry Ranson — P. C. Eastbourne

Presumably Henry Ranson was the police constable who gave evidence to the Court about the earlier trial at the Lewes Quarter Session. Proceedings of the Court are not recorded: *Minutes of Evidence* (PRO CRIM10) merely report that *Horace William Tapson (37, traveller) pleaded guilty of obtaining by false pretences from Charles Walls Blackall £8, the money of Hudson Brothers, with intent to defraud*. Horace would have been 36 years old.

It is clear from the indictment that Horace's father, William John Tapson, had taken over the family home at Blackheath, his father and sisters having died before 1912. Lee and Hither Green are very close to Blackheath, where William John died in September 1912; his second wife, Annie, had died in 1911 (*vide* page 248). Horace's wife left him soon after this trial (*vide* earlier Addendum).

(p 305) The *Wm Blachford* whose death was registered (Tavistock R.D.) in 1854, Q4, would seem to have been the husband of Ann, whose second marriage is recorded four years later in Ontario:*

9 July 1858 *Woodstock, Oxford County*

Jonathan Burnham Dobson *27* *Residence: Gray County* *Born: New Brunswick*
Parents: John Dobson & Ruth Dobson

Ann Blatchford *28* *Residence: Woodstock* *Born: England*
Parents: Thomas Tapson & Jane Tapson

However, Ann would have been 38 years old. Soon after the death of her first husband she and her young family had emigrated to Canada, where the marriage of their youngest daughter is recorded:

23 Dec 1874 *Perth County*

John May *21* *Residence: Mitchell, Ont* *Born: Whitby, Ont*
Cabinet Maker *Bachelor* *Methodist* *Parents: Joseph May & Christina ...man*

Mary Jane Blatchford *21* *Residence: Mitchell, Ont* *Born: Lydford, Devon*
Spinster *Methodist* *Parents: William Blatchford & Ann Tapson*
Witnesses: George Blatchford & Ann Blatchford

The birth of Mary Jane had been registered (Tavistock R.D.) in 1853, Q3. George Blatchford, one of the witnesses, was Mary Jane's younger brother; the identity of the other witness is not certain. The elder brother, William Blatchford, married Lucinda McDonald in Perth County on 25 August 1868; George Blatchford, an organ builder, married Hannah Dickinson in Perth County on 28 December 1876; like Mary Jane, both named their residence as Mitchell, Ontario, and one of the witnesses at George's marriage was John May, his brother-in-law. Mitchell is less than 50 miles from Woodstock, Ann's home at the time of her second marriage; both towns are in S.W. Ontario, to the north of London.

(p 329 and earlier Addendum) Like his brother Joseph (page 238), Charles Tapson was brought before the Central Criminal Court. Curiously there are two *Indictments* (CRIM4/651); the first reads:

The Jurors for our Lord the King, upon their Oath present, That Charles Tapson of the parish of Saint Bride in London and within the Jurisdiction of the said Court, Labourer on the Third Day of January in the Year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Sixty Two at the parish aforesaid and within the Jurisdiction of the said Court, being Servant to George Hollis Brett, then and there with Force and Arms, feloniously did steal, take, and carry away two Loaves of Bread of the Goods and Chattels of the said George Hollis Brett, the Master and Employer of the said Charles Tapson Against the Peace .....

2ND COUNT ..... *on the Third Day of February in the Year aforesaid .....two Loaves of Bread .....*

3RD COUNT ..... *on the Third Day of March in the Year aforesaid .....two Loaves of Bread .....*

The second Indictment reads:

The Jurors for our Lord the King, upon their Oath present, That Charles Tapson late of the Parish of Saint Bride in London and within the Jurisdiction of the said Court, Labourer on the Third Day of April in the Year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Sixty Two at the parish aforesaid and within the Jurisdiction of the said Court, was Servant to George Hollis Brett, and did then and there receive and take into his possession the sum of one shilling in Money, for and on the Account of the said George Hollis Brett his said Master. And that the said Charles Tapson afterwards, and within the space of Six Calendar Months, to wit, on the Fourth Day of April in the Year aforesaid ..... did receive and take into his possession the further sum of one shilling in Money, for and on the Account of the said George Hollis Brett his said Master. And that the said Charles Tapson afterwards ..... on the Fifth Day of April in the Year aforesaid ..... did receive and take into his possession the further sum of seven pence halfpenny in Money for and on the Account of the said George Hollis Brett .....

The verdict is appended:

Confesses himself Guilty *To be Imprisoned and kept to hard labor in the House of Correction at Holloway* *Six Calendar Months*

Proceedings of the Court are not recorded: *Minutes of Evidence* (PRO CRIM10) merely report that

Charles Tapson (16) pleaded guilty — and the officer stated that he had been embezzling small sums all the time he had been at Mr Brett's

* From indexes of *www.ancestry.com* (image unavailable)

(p 342) A few months after William had finished the prison sentence of six months to which he was sentenced on 7 January 1845 at the Clerkenwell Quarter Sessions (*vide* earlier Addendum), he appeared on 27 October 1845 before the Central Criminal Court (*Old Bailey*) along with an accomplice, Frederick Greenwood, on a charge of *theft > simple larceny*. The *Indictment* (PRO CRIM4/283) names *Frederick Greenwood late of the Parish of Saint Luke Chelsea Labourer* and *William Tapson late of the same place Labourer* and refers to William Tapson's *conviction for Felony at the General Quarter Session of the Peace held at the Session House on Clerkenwell Green on Tuesday the seventh day of January.* *Minutes of Evidence* taken at the trial read:

> *FREDERICK GREENWOOD and WILLIAM TAPSON were indicted for stealing 10 lbs. weight of beef, value 3s. 6d.; and 6 lbs. of mutton, 2s. 6d.; the goods of Thomas Charles Cross.*
>
> THOMAS CHARLES CROSS: *I live at Chelsea. On the morning of the 9th of Sept., about five, I missed part of a leg of mutton and some beef from the safe under the area — the safe had been locked, and was cut open — I have not seen it since — I know both the prisoners.*
> SAMUEL SARGEANT (police constable B186): *I saw the prisoners loitering about between eleven and twelve o'clock that night, about 100 yards from Mr Cross's.*
> HENRY ROWLAND: *I live in Pimlico. I saw the prisoners on the Friday after the 9th of Sept. — I asked them if they had heard of Mr Cross's safe being robbed of mutton and beef — they laughed, and Greenwood said it was them that had it — then Tapson laughed again, and said he cut the b....y safe all to pieces.*
> WILLIAM ANSTEAD: *I know the prisoners. About five o'clock on the morning of the 9th of Sept., I saw them on the side of the brickkiln — there was a handkerchief on the bricks — I asked what they had got in the handkerchief — they said "Beef" — I asked them to let me look at it — they untied the handkerchief, and let me look at the beef in my hands — they asked me if I would buy it — I said no, it did not come by good means and I would not — they said it came from Old Brompton, and I should have it for 1s. — I would not have it — they gave my dog some mutton bones.*
> TAPSON: *Q. Who did it belong to? A. I cannot say — there was another person with the prisoners, and they banded it about from one to the other.*
> GREENWOOD'S DEFENCE: *I went down to the brickkiln and saw the man with it.*
>
> NOT GUILTY

In view of the evidence, it seems surprising that William, then 19 years old, and Frederick should have been found not guilty; they obviously had a sympathetic jury. But William was not to be as lucky a few months later when he was once again brought before the Central Criminal Court, on 5 January 1846 (*vide* earlier Addendum).

* www.cornwall-opc.org/par (images unavailable)

Meanwhile, William's sister Susan had faced a charge of *theft > simple larceny* in the Central Criminal Court on 14 September 1840. The *Indictment* (PRO CRIM4/149) names her as *Susan Tapson late of the Parish of Saint Margaret Westminster.* The *Minutes of Evidence* record that:

> *SUSAN TAPSON was indicted for stealing, on the 13th of August, 1 crown and 9 shillings, the monies of James Bedford.*
>
> JAMES BEDFORD: *I am a sadler. On the 13th of August I met the prisoner at Knightsbridge, and went with her to a house in the Great Almonry, Westminster — I had nine shillings and a five-shilling piece in my fob when I went there — I had given her 2s. besides — we went to bed — I fell asleep — I was awoke in the night by the landlady, who inquired if all was right — I was half-asleep and said yes — the prisoner was then gone — I heard the door shut — which awoke me — I felt my trowsers, and my fob-pocket was cut off jagged as with a knife, and the money was gone — I dressed myself and went after the prisoner with a policeman — I found her in New Pye-street, and gave her in charge — I described at the station-house what money I had lost, and nine shillings and a five-shilling piece were found on her with 18d. more — the door of the room was locked on the inside — no one could have got in or taken it but the prisoner.*
> SARAH RUSSELL: *I am the landlady of the house. The prisoner and prosecutor came and had a room together — she came down about three o'clock in the morning and asked me to let her out — I asked if her friend knew she was coming out — she said he was awake — I went up stairs and found him asleep — I asked if all was right, and I let her go — he afterwards discovered his loss.*
> JOHN SCOTT: *I am a policeman. The prosecutor applied to me and said he had lost a five-shilling piece and nine shillings — I found the prisoner at a ginger-beer shop, in New Pye-street, about three minutes past three o'clock and took her into custody — she said "I have not robbed him, I have not got his money" — I found this purse on her, containing a five-shilling piece, nine shillings, and 18d. — I did not find the fob that was cut off, but I found a small piece of it in this knife found on the prisoner — it was thrown away.*
> PRISONER'S DEFENCE: *I had the money when I went into the house — I had been with a gentleman at Knightsbridge — the prosecutor was awake when I left, and knew I was gone.*
> NOT GUILTY

The evidence again seems overwhelmingly in favour of the prosecutor; perhaps the jury thought he should be punished for taking advantage of a girl only 15½ years old.* Susan died in 1855, aged about 30 years (*vide* page 343).

It would seem to be the eldest sister, Ann, who was the next member of the family brought before the Central Criminal Court, on 21 August 1848, on a charge of *violent theft > robbery*. There is some doubt about her date of birth (*vide* page 342), since it is not certain whether or not Ann Catherine was the same person as Ann Caroline. However, she would have been around 28 years old at the time of the trial. She is named in the *Indictment* (PRO CRIM4/355) as *Ann Tapson of the parish of Saint Luke Chelsea*. The rather long *Minutes of Evidence* begin thus:

> ANN TAPSON, ANN PICKETT and JOHN KEATES were indicted for a robbery together, on John Archer, and stealing 1 seal, 1 watch-chain, and 1 key, value 1l. 12s., his property.
>
> JOHN ARCHER: *I am a servant at 63, Lower Sloan-street, Chelsea. On the night of 11th July, about twenty minutes past eleven o'clock, I was in Sloan-street, and saw the two female prisoners there — they accosted me — one came on my right, and the other on my left side —they invited me to come along with them — I declined, and told them to go about their business — they would not — Pickett, who was on my left, snatched at my watch, and dragged my silver chain, gold seal, and common key from my watch — the guard, which is now round my neck, saved it — she flew into the road — I immediately* ***bolted*** *after her — she up with her fist and knocked my hat off, and I received a tremendous blow at the side of my head —*

* The age of 26 given for Susan in the index of *www.oldbaileyonline.org* was the age of the prisoner at the next trial recorded on the same page of the Minutes of Evidence.

I stooped to pick up my hat, and as I rose I received another tremendous blow at the side of my head — the prisoner Keates then came up, and said, "Did you strike that woman?" — I said, "Yes" — her shawl fell off, he picked it up, and said, "Do you mean to strike her?" — I said, "Yes" — she ran as hard as she could down the street, calling out, "I will follow you home" — I said, "Do you mean to keep that shawl?" — he said, "Yes" — I said, "I will thank you to give it to me till I get my property back" — he said, "No" —he took it and gave it to Tapson, who was on the pavement — she said, "I know who that shawl belongs to" — I said, "You shall give it to me" — she said, "No, I shall keep it" — they walked on down Sloan-street and I followed them, and insisted on having my property or the shawl — there were two more ***bullies*** *on the pavement — at the corner of Exceter-street a policeman came up, and I gave Tapson in custody — I did not charge Keates then.*

A witness stated that Tapson was coming in the opposite direction and picked up the shawl, saying that she intended to give it to a policeman, and that it was another woman who, with Pickett, had accosted the prosecutor. This witness said he had given his address to the policeman, and Tapson's sister later came to ask him to come and state what he knew. Another witness spoke in defence of Keates. The *Minutes of Evidence* end thus:

PICKETT — GUILTY. Aged 24. — Transported for Ten Years.
TAPSON and KEATES — NOT GUILTY

Although she was found not guilty, it has to be asked what Ann was doing in the street at 11.20 p.m. When she married in 1852 she gave her name as *Ann Caroline* (*vide* page 343). It would appear that Ann Catherine had either died or had never existed; knowing, as we now do, about this disfunctional family, it seems a distinct possibility that it was the same daughter who was baptized a second time because the parents had forgotten that she had already been baptized and had also forgotten both the second name they had given their daughter at the first baptism and her date of birth!

NOTE regarding the financial troubles of Ebsworthy Tapson Senior #10 (page 141)

Owners of estates in Bridestowe parish had been allowed by the Bishop of Exeter to build and maintain pews, often enclosed, in St Briget's church exclusively for their own and their families' use. By 1766 the Stone estate had been split into two equally rated estates, Higher Stone, occupied by John Newton, and Lower Stone, most of which had already been leased by Ebsworthy Tapson for about ten years. [The land tax assessments show that he leased Lower Stone until his death in 1784 (pages 139-141).] On 13 May 1766 Newton petitioned the Bishop for Licence of Confirmation of the right of Higher Stone to the two seats in the church belonging to Stone; this was granted on 19 May, whereupon, on 27 June, Ebsworthy's legal representative presented to the Consistory Court Ebsworthy's counterclaim of the right of Lower Stone to the two seats. When his five witnesses were unwilling to travel to Exeter to testify, Ebsworthy was forced to apply for a compulsory witness order for them to appear at the court on 9 September; after the elderly witnesses had given their evidence at the court the case was adjourned until 7 November, when Newton's legal representative listed his objections to the witnesses' evidence. At the next hearing of the court, on 14 November, Ebsworthy presented his evidence at great length. Newton's six witnesses, also elderly, had been summoned to appear at the court on 30 December; after they had given their evidence at this sitting of the court there was yet another long wait before judgement, in favour of Newton, was read out in the Consistory Court on 8 May 1767: *a Licence of Confirmation of the said seats was to be granted to Newton*. Ebsworthy, not accepting the judgement, appealed to the Arches Court of Canterbury. On 19 June the appeal was disallowed, with costs awarded against Ebsworthy. The costs amounted to £26. 6s. 8d, a substantial sum to be found, even before payment of his own considerable legal expenses. He had gained nothing from this litigation, which was quite needless because he already had rights to seats in the church due to his other estates. In any case, as it transpired during the Consistory Court proceedings, Ebsworthy had a seat in the gallery as a member of the choir.

The Spacious Interior of St. Andrew's Church
Buckland Monachorum

The present church, in the Perpendicular Style, was built about 1490 on the site of at least two earlier churches dating back to Norman, or possibly Saxon, times and has witnessed the baptism, marriage and funeral of many a Tapson.

Buckland Monachorum Baptisms from 1552 to 1750

14	Jan	1552	Johanna	filia	Thome Tapson	
11	Mar	1552	Christopherus	filius	Johannis Tapson	
10	Apr	1556	Thomas	filius	Johannis Tapson	
16	Jun	1556	Agnes	filia	Johannis Tapson	
23	Oct	1558	Johanna	filia	Johannis Tapson	
7	Sep	1561	Johannes	filius	Johannis Tapson	
2	Aug	1563	Thomasina	filia	Johannis Tapson	
21	Nov	1565	Paschalis	filius	Johannis Tapson	
13	Sep	1567	Thomas	filius	Tapson	3.8
21	Mar	1571	Agnes	filia	Johannis Tapson	
28	Sep	1572	Katharina	filia	Guilielmi Tapson	
3	Jul	1573	Alicia	filia	Guilielmi Tapson	
5	Jul	1573	Agnes	filia	Johannis Tapson	
24	Sep	1574	Richarda	filia	Guilielmi Tapson	
18	Feb	1574	Elizabetha	filia	Guilielmi Tapson	
13	Apr	1575	Maria	filia	Hugonis Tapson	1.5
14	Apr	1576	Philippus	filius	Johannis Tapson	
10	Jul	1577	Alicia	filia	Guilielmi Tapson	
14	Nov	1577	Christopherus	filius	Johannis Tapson	
17	Feb	1577	Johanna	filia	Guilielmi Tapson	
23	Feb	1577	Alicia	filia	Hugonis Tapson	1.5
10	Sep	1578	Johannes	filius	Johannis Tapson	
11	Jan	1578	Thomasina	filia	Johannis Tapson	
24	Dec	1579	Christopherus	filius	Richardi Tapson	2.2
18	Feb	1580	Johannes	filius	Guilielmi Tapson	
21	Mar	1580	Rodolphus	filius	Johannis Tapson	
6	Sep	1581	Guilielmus	filius	Johannis Tapson	
10	Mar	1581	Margareta	filia	Richardi Tapson	2.2
4	Feb	1583	Margeria	filia	Guilielmi Tapson	
20	Feb	1583	Amisia	filia	Johannis Tapson	
28	Mar	1584		filius	Richardi Tapson	2.2
12	Dec	1586	Richarda	filia	Richardi Tapson	2.2
22	Jan	1586	Margareta	filia	Guilielmi Tapson	
17	Feb	1588	Guilielmus	filius	Richardi Tapson	2.2
30	Jul	1589	Richarda	filia	Guilielmi Tapson de Beare	
12	Nov	1589	Robertus	filius	Roberti Tapson	4.4
27	Jun	1590	Elizeus	filius	Johannis Tapson	3.13
2	Aug	1590	Alicia	filia	Johannis Tapson	
5	Mar	1591	Temperancia	filia	Roberti Tapson	4.4
3	May	1593	Johanna Rabigia	filie	Johannis Tapson	
1	Sep	1593	Agnes	filia	Richardi Tapson	2.2
24	Sep	1593	Margareta	filia	Johannis Tapson	
29	Jun	1594	Richardus	filius	Johannis Tapson	
23	Aug	1594	Johannes	filius	Roberti Tapson	4.4
6	Feb	1595	Johannes	filius	Richardi Tapson	2.2
19	Dec	1596	Richardus	filius	Roberti Tapson	4.4
12	Mar	1596	Agnes	filia	Johannis Tapson	
2	Feb	1597	Thomas	filius	Thome Tapson	3.7
2	Jun	1599	Johanna	filia	Roberti Tapson	4.4

Cornwall - East Hundred (34 parishes)

Christopher Tapson	*St. Germans Parish*	(11 miles)
John Tapson	*St. Ive Parish*	(11 miles)

Devonshire - Roborough Hundred (14 parishes, St. Budeaux missing)

John Tapson (Constable)	*Buckland Monachorum Parish*	
John Tapson	" " "	
William Tapson	" " "	
John Tapson	*Plymouth Parish*	(9 miles)
William Tapson	" "	(9 miles)
Elias Tapson	*Sampford Spiney Parish*	(4 miles)
John Tapson (Overseer)	*Meavy Parish*	(3 miles)

Devonshire - Lifton Hundred (20 parishes, Coryton missing)

Thomas Tapson Esq.	*Bratton Clovelly Parish*	(15 miles)
Robert Tapson	" " "	(15 miles)
Richard Tapson (Constable)•	*Bridestowe Parish*	(13 miles)

It will be observed that the only Tapsons listed in either county were all living in the three adjoining hundreds of Roborough and Lifton in Devonshire and East in Cornwall, and all within a radius of 15 miles of Buckland Monachorum village. The missing return from St. Budeaux (7 miles) would probably have contained the name of Thomas Tapson (page 82).

Buckland Abbey

• Clearly shown as *Nicholas Tapson* in the original document in the House of Lords Archive (reference HL/PO/JO/10/1). The other constable named was *William Ebsworthie* (see page 115).

1.10 THE HEARTH TAX

The hearth tax was introduced in 1662 in order to make up a deficiency of £300,000 in the £1,200,000 permanent annual revenue which had been granted to King Charles II by the Commons. The tax, of two shillings per annum for each hearth, was levied on the occupier of each house unless his total property was worth less than £1 a year and his annual income was less than £10. The penalty for attempted evasion was imprisonment for up to one month. After 1664 the tax had to be paid on all houses with more than two chimneys, the landlord having to pay the tax for poor tenants; and if a stopped-up chimney was discovered, it was charged double. After the 1689 collection the tax was repealed by William III.

The 1664 returns for Cornwall* survive complete (PRO E179/244/44). For Devon† the latest available returns, which are very incomplete, are those of Lady Day 1674; but fortunately those for the hundreds of Roborough and Lifton, where the Devonshire Tapsons were all living at the time of the Protestation Oath in 1641/2, survive for all parishes, although there is some loss of names (PRO E179/245/17). There follows a list of every reference to a Tapson in these returns together with the number of hearths taxed, distances of the parishes from the village of Buckland Monachorum being shown in parentheses.

Cornwall (1664) - East Hundred (32 parishes)

Robert Tapson	*2*	*Calstock Parish*	(4 miles)

Devonshire (1674) - Roborough Hundred (17 parishes - complete)

Joan Tapson	*2*	*Buckland Monachorum Parish*	
John Tapson	*3*	„ „ „	
..... *Tapson*	*7*	*Sampford Spiney Parish*	(4 miles)
Ann Tapson	*3*	*Meavy Parish*	(3 miles)
John Tapson	*1*	„ „	(3 miles)
Mr Rich Tapson	*5*	*Eastone House* (East Stonehouse)	(9 miles)

Devonshire (1674) - Lifton Hundred (21 parishes - complete)

John Tapson	*3*	*Bratton* (Clovelly) *Parish*	(15 miles)
Robert Tapson	*2*	*Bridestowe Parish*	(13 miles)
Martin Tapson	*1 (Pauper)*	„ „	(13 miles)

Devonshire (1674) - Ermington Hundred (12 parishes - complete)

John Tapson	*6*	*Modbury Towne Parish*	(15 miles)

Although many of the Devonshire returns are missing, it is significant that, from those which survive, the Tapsons are still to be found living in or very close to Buckland Monachorum. Lifton hundred is to the north of Roborough hundred, whilst Ermington hundred is to its south-east.

1.11 PROBATE RECORDS

Probate records are of two types: wills and administrations, the latter often referred to as *admons*. A *Grant of Probate* means that a will has been proved and that authority has been given by a probate court to the named executor(s) to carry out its terms. If the deceased died intestate or if the named executors of a will were unavailable, through death or otherwise, the next-of-kin or a close friend or creditor could apply to a probate court for *Letters of Administration* authorising him to administer the estate of the deceased.

*T.L. STOATE(Ed): Cornwall Hearth and Poll Taxes 1660 - 1664, Pub. by T.L. Stoate, 1981

†T.L. STOATE(Ed): Devon Hearth Tax Returns 1674, Pub. by T.L. Stoate, 1982

Christopher	baptized	24	Dec	1579
Margaret	baptized	10	Mar	1581/2
(a son)	baptized	28	Mar	1584
Richaurd	baptized	12	Dec	1586
William	baptized	17	Feb	1588/9
Agnes	baptized	1	Sep	1593
John	baptized	6	Feb	1595/6
Thomas	baptized	3	Sep	1600

It is of course possible that there were two Richards in Buckland Monachorum having children at this time, although this possibility is less likely on account of the regular occurrence of these baptisms at intervals of just over two years, except for an interval of double this length of time before the baptism of Agnes and again before the baptism of Thomas. In the register, which dates from 1581, of the church of Plymouth St. Andrew, the earliest Tapson entry is the baptism (page 17):

10 Jun 1593 John, son of Richard Tapson

This could refer to another child of the same Richard, perhaps already a year old, so demonstrating an early association of the family with Plymouth. If so, this John must have died before the baptism of Richard's next son, also named John. There would seem to be no burial entry for the earlier John at Plymouth St. Andrew, but the writing in the register for that period is very faded.

It may also be significant that the William in the above list had two brothers, John and Thomas, baptized in the sequence in which the 1632 will lists his brothers as executors. It will be demonstrated later (page 77) that Christopher had long since been dead when William made his will; and the third child may have been on the point of death when baptized in 1584 before being named, though his burial is not recorded.

William, if it was indeed he who was baptized on 17 February 1588/9, would have been 37 years of age when the following burial entry was made in the register of Plymouth St. Andrew:

9 Jan 1625 Joane wyfe of Wm Tapson

Five months later the parish register of Totnes records the marriage:

6 Jun 1626 William Tapson & Elizabeth Hitchings

but provides no further information. From his will we know that William's wife was named Elizabeth, so this could well have been his second marriage, for it was quite quickly followed by baptisms recorded at Plymouth St. Andrew:

5 Dec 1627	*Emblinge*	*dau of William Tapson*
23 Jul 1629	*Richard*	*son of William Topson Ston*
10 Jul 1631	*Emling*	*dau of William Tapson Ston*
26 Jun 1633	*William*	*son of Mr Wm Tapson Sto*
5 Aug 1635	*Elizab*	*dau of Mr William Tapson Ston & Mrs Elizab his wife*
1 Nov 1637	*Mary*	*dau of Mr Wm & Mrs Elizab Tapson*
19 Jun 1639	*Elizab*	*dau of Mr Wm Tapson Ston & of Mrs Elizab his wife*
11 Aug 1641	*Joane*	*dau of Mr William & Mrs Elizab Topson*
16 Dec 1643	*Margarett*	*dau of Mr William Tapson Ston*

Ston is clearly an abbreviation for East Stonehouse; the titles *Mr* and *Mrs* were only used for people of some social status. There seems to be no burial entry for Emblinge in the register of Plymouth St. Andrew, as one might expect, prior to the baptism of Emling on 10 July 1631; it is possible that she was buried at East Stonehouse, but the registers of that chapelry survive, in transcript, only from 1697. However, the Plymouth St. Andrew register does record the two burials:

15 Nov 1636 Elizab dau of Mr Wm Tapson Ston

30 Jul 1641 Elizab dau of Mr Wm Tapson Ston

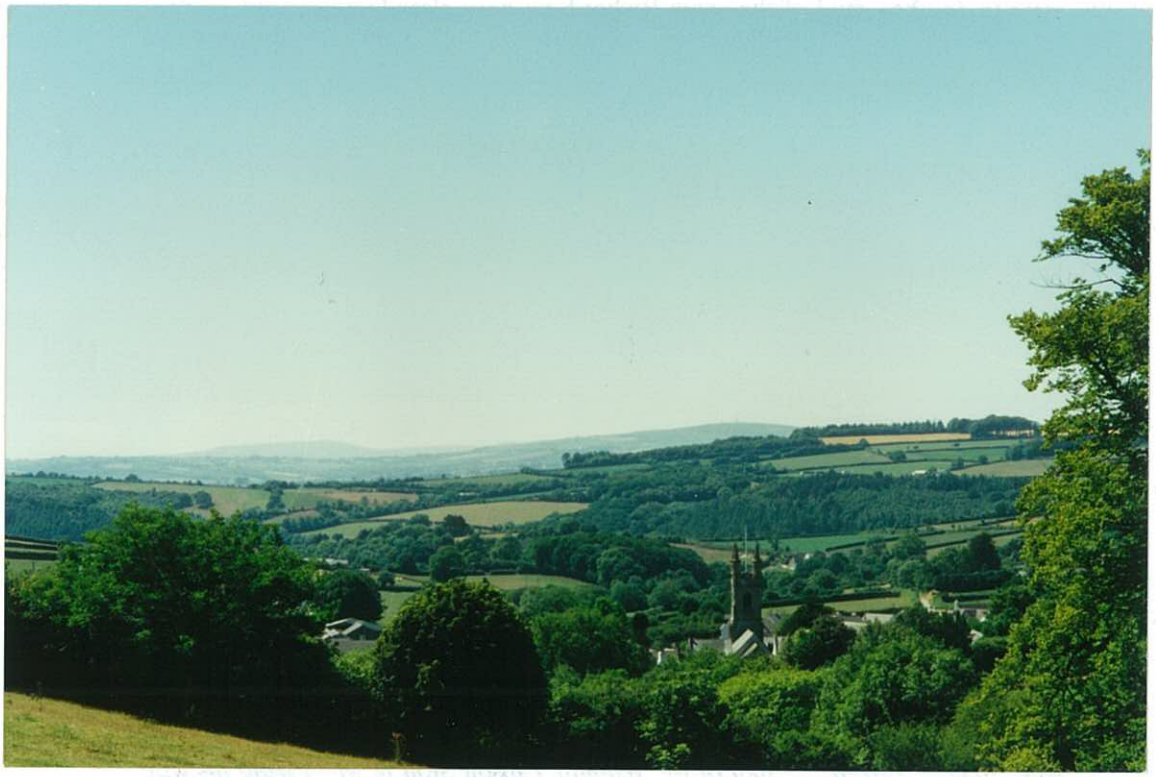
An Emlin Hichinge was married on 20 November 1615 in the church of Plymouth St. Andrew, so it could be that Emlin was a popular name in the Hitchings family, even the name of Elizabeth's mother.

William was buried at Plymouth St. Andrew just a few weeks before his wife:

11 Mar 1644 Mr William Topsham
3 Apr 1645 Mrs Elizabeth Topson wid

The recurrence of the names *Topsham* and *Topson* (page 16) is interesting. William's will was proved at London on 10 June 1646, fifteen months after his funeral, on the oath of John Tapson, his brother and one of the executors. Assuming that William was baptized at Buckland Monachorum on 17 February 1588/9, he would have been 56 when he died. No evidence has so far come to light that he had any children by his first marriage; events of his early life, as they reveal themselves in the following pages, suggest that he might not long have been married to Joan before her death in January 1625/6. Further weight is given to the hypothesis that William was the son of Richard Tapson of Buckland Monachorum by his naming his first son Richard before naming his second son after himself.

Buckland Monachorum Nestling in the Dartmoor Foothills



2.3 WILLIAM'S MILLS

In his will William refers to his mills. That William rented mills from the Plymouth Corporation is clear from the Receivers' Book of Accounts III (WDRO W132) in which appears

1646-7 Here followeth the Account of Nichs Edgecombe marchant Receiver ....

Among the items received is

Item recd for arrerages of rente of the milles in parte of foure yeares rents due from Mr Tapson *xlij li viij s*

This was the year in which William's will was proved. Another entry in the Receivers' Book begins

1649-50 Here followeth the Account of Caleb Brookinge Receiver ....

and one of the items listed is

Item recd of the Hospitall of Orphants Aide and the Executors of William Tapson for the rent of Towne Mills *xxxiiij li iij s iiij d* *34 - 03 - 04*

said William Rowes decease to the intent that the same might not be lyable to any of her said husbands debts .....?..... for her the said Elizabeth or with her privatie or by her consent have taken into theire hands divers goods and Chattles money debts obligacons and specialtyes .....?..... said William Rowe and receaved the same by or with her privatie and consent and she the said Elizabeth hath not given any true Inventory thereof but conceale the same being .....?..... of six Thousand pounds And have undervalued and Concealed the true value of the premises And by such wayes and by keeping of howse and other indirect Courses intendeth .....?..... wrong her said husbands creditors but especially your Orator Notwithstanding the said William Rowes personall estate had the same byn truly discovered and really .....?..... have amounted to a farre greater somme then the payment of his debts. Wherefore in regard that your said orator cannot by Common Lawe Compell the said Margaret to paie unto the said William Elford the said fiftie pounds with forbearance thereof so by the said William Rowe of him borrowed which Contrary to all equitie and good Conscience .....?..... to satisfie as aforesaid nor to compell the said William Elford to assign over the said bond for your Orators releife against the said Elizabeth and for that your Orator cannot discover the .....?..... what personall estate the said William Rowe dyed possessed of nor to what value the same amounted unto or for what or in what manner the same were sould whether mony in hand or for valuable Consideracon neither what Assetts are yet remayning unadministred and in whose hands the same are but hopeth the said Elizabeth upon her Corporall Oath will Confesse the truth of the premises and your Orator is altogeather remedilesse and helplesse by the strict Rules of the Common Lawe for his debts aforesaid to him due in Regard of the said undue practises of the said Elizabeth Rowe May it therefore please your Lordshipp the premises considered to grant unto your Orator his majesties most gracious writt of Subpena to be directed to the said Elizabeth Rowe and William Elford thereby Commanding them at a Certayne day and under a Certen paine therein to bee lymited personally to bee and appeare before your Lordshipp in his majesties most honorable Court of Chauncery then and there to answere all and singular the premises and to discover the truth thereof and of every parte thereof upon thire Corporall Oath and further to stand to and abide such order as your Lordshipp in your grand wisdome shall award And your Orator shall daylie pray for your Lordshipps health and happinesse Long to Continue

Plymouth Sound towards Drake's Island, Mount Edgcumbe and the distant Cornish hills

2.9 CHANCERY SUIT: WILLIAM TAPSON v EDWARD TYTHER

xj die Maij 1635 To the right honorable Thomas Lord Coventrie Lord Keeper of the greate Seale of England

In all humilitie complayninge sheweth unto your good Lordshippe your daylie Orator William Tapson of East Stonehowse within the parish of Plymouth in the County of Devon marchant that whereas about five yeres since Edward Tyther of London marchant beinge in Plymouth aforesaide and meetinge with your saide Orator intreated him to spare him one Richard Browne your orators kinsman to take care and looke to the weighinge and shippinge aboard of divers Chests of Sugar which the saide Edward Tyther had there bought and entended to shippe aboarde a certaine shippe there bound for London which your saide orator consented unto accordinglie your orators saide kinsman did take care and looke to the weighinge and puttinge aboarde the saide shippe the saide Chests of Sugar for the said Tither and discharged the saide imployment soe well that the saide Tither then affirmed unto your saide orator that he had a greate likinge to the saide Browne and was desirous to take him to be his apprentice soe as he might have but some litle tyme of further tryall of him in London which the saide Browne alsoe yeelded unto and the saide Browne at thinstance and request of the saide Tyther went from Plymouth aforesaide to London in the same shippe whereinto the saide Tithers Sugers were laden aboarde and after his repairinge to London the saide Tither imployed him by a longe tyme about his affaires and imployments and havinge had sufficyent experience and Tryall of his Care carriadge and behaviour did afterwards take him the saide Browne to be his Apprentize by Indentures betweene them accordinge to the custome of the Citty of London with whome the saide Browne lived and behaved himself dilligently orderly and honestlie for divers yeres And in the terme of Easter in the yere of our Lord god 1632 your saide orator havinge occasions to come out of Devon to London aforesaide mett againe with the saide Tither whoe then very much commended his saide Apprentize and informed your saide Orator that he was honest and carefull and that he doubted not but he would continue soe, and that for the love which he bare unto him he would lend him three or fower hundred pounds to be by him imployed for his best advantage to raise him a stocke against the tyme of his apprentishipp should expire and that he hoped to see his saide servant Browne a riche man against his tyme should come out and much the rather if your saide Orator had engaged himself by bonde for his truth which the saide Tyther alleadged was necessary only to keepe the saide Browne in awe and for none other purpose for the saide Tyther promised and protested to make none other use thereof nor to take any advantage of the saide Bond against your saide Orator uppon which promises and protestacons and many other faire and alluringe speeches your saide Orator was persuaded and drawne to become bound to him the saide Tyther in one bonde of the summe of twoe hundred pounds or thereabouts with Condicon for his saide Apprentizes truth and faithfull service the certayntie of which Condicon your orator cannot expresse, the saide Tyther then and many other tymes affirminge that the saide Browne had alwaies formerly demeaned and carryed himself honestlie and respectfully and had not wronged or been false unto him in any thinge and then alsoe promisinge that he would never take any advantage uppon or by reason of the saide Bonde but that the same should remayne in his the saide Tythers custodie only as a rayne to rule his saide Apprentice therewith in case he should offer to misdemeane himself and that he should thereby be drawen still to continue true and carefull Nowe soe it is may it please your good Lordshippe the said Tyther having thus cunningly drawen your saide orator to enter into the saide Bond of twoe hundred pounds or thereabouts as aforesaide and entendinge thereby to drawe your saide orator within the Compasse and condicon of the saide Bond combyned with his saide Apprentize and by practize betweene them caused his saide Apprentize to subscribe a note or accoumpt under his hand by which his saide Apprentize should acknowledge to have received severall summes of severall persons which was his saide masters monyes amountinge in the whole to two hundred and twelve pounds Fifteene shillings and twoe pence as namely To ballance the accompt in the Cashe Booke one hundred and nine pounds Fifteen shillings and ten pence Received of Robert Abbott which was not putt to accoumpt twenty sixe pounds Received of John Grante which was not putt to accoumpt ten pounds Received of Richard Lamdon which was not put to accompt ten pounds Received of Jeremie Kettell which was not putt to accompt twenty sixe pounds Received of M^r^ Lywett which was not put to accompt thirty pounds and likewise to expresse by the same note howe the same was mispent and loste as namely Spent at the Tennes Courte at severall

3.6 WALTER TAPSON OF PLYMOUTH

Both Thomas Tapson who died on the Greenwich (page 25) and Robert Tapson who died on the Adventure (page 24) joined the Adventure whilst Richard Tapson Junior was Lieutenant on that ship (page 27), Captain Richard Tapson having already died. This suggests that Thomas, as well as Robert, was a near relative of the two Richard Tapsons. Further weight is given to this possibility by the fact that, although Thomas was a bachelor (page 25), his wages after his discharge from the Adventure were paid to *M^rs Topson* (page 27) who, since she was not his wife, was probably the wife of Richard Tapson Junior. It is even possible that Thomas and Robert were brothers, both sons, whose baptisms have not yet been traced, of Captain Richard Tapson's younger brother, William. We know that this William lived at Stonehouse and had a daughter Elizabeth (page 70): and the letters of administration of Thomas's estate (page 25) state that Thomas came from Stonehouse and name, as administratrix, his only sister Elizabeth. However, the names Thomas and Elizabeth also appear in the family of William Tapson, *Cordwyner*, so perhaps the Thomas who died on the Greenwich was a descendant of that branch of the Tapson family.

If it is difficult to identify Robert and Thomas with any degree of certainty, it is even harder to come up with a theory about the identity of John Tapson who died on the Bredah. We know from the two letters of administration (page 25) that he came from Plymouth, that his father was Walter, and that he had a brother named Thomas. The register of Plymouth St. Andrew records the baptisms:

27	*Dec*	*1672*	*John*	*son of Walter & Eliza: Tapson Sto:*
9	*Apr*	*1679*	*Eliza:*	*dau of Walter & Elizabeth Topson*
8	*May*	*1681*	*Christo:*	*son of Walter Tapson*
16	*May*	*1683*	*Richard*	*son of Walter & Eliz: Tapson Sto:*
20	*Sep*	*1685*	*Walter*	*son of Walter & Elizabeth Tapson Sto:*

There does not seem to be a baptismal entry in the Plymouth St. Andrew register for Thomas, so it is likely that he was baptized elsewhere. Walter's son John would have been 23 years old when he died on the Bredah (page 29). (The Ed Harman mentioned in the Pay Book for the Bredah was acting as attorney for Walter; his name appears against other entries in the pay book, so he probably went along to the Navy Pay Office in London on behalf of several clients to collect wages.)

Walter was an unusual name in the Tapson family, but the other names Walter gave to his children were of frequent occurrence among the descendants of Richard Tapson who died in 1619 at Buckland Monachorum and who stands at the head of this branch of the family tree; so it could be that Walter Tapson was a descendant of this Richard, though no baptismal entry for him has so far come to light. One possibility is that he may have been a son of John Tapson, about whose early life we know only that after his marriage in 1627 a daughter was baptized in 1631 (page 71); he may well have had other children. One of the State Papers (PRO SP16/70, piece 43) is an inventory, certified by George Fielding, Registrar of the Court of the Admiralty, and Richard Dike, of certain sugar and other goods landed out of the Lady of ....?.... (presumably a merchant ship), brought into London by *Captain Topson*. This intriguing document is dated 6 July 1627, just four days after John's marriage in Plymouth; could it be that John was a captain and that immediately after his wedding he set sail out of Plymouth for London with his young wife aboard? We can only speculate.

The register of Holborn St. Andrew (GL) records the baptisms of children of some of the earliest Tapsons to make their homes in London; the names suggest that some of them at least may have been descendants of Walter Tapson of Plymouth:

2	*Sep*	*1688*	*Thomas*	*son of Thomas Topson & Ann*	*born in Fullwoods Rents*
21	*Nov*	*1725*	*George*	*son of Walter Tapstone & Ann*	*Saffron Hill*
26	*Nov*	*1727*	*Ann*	*dau of Walter Tapson & Ann*	*Grays Inn Lane*
23	*Nov*	*1727*	*Elizabeth*	*dau of Edward Topson & Eliz*	*Lickq^spond Street*
3	*Feb*	*1728*	*Jane*	*dau of Edward Tapson & Eliz^h*	*Lickq^spond Street*
25	*Aug*	*1730*	*John*	*son of John Topson & Sarah*	*in Grays Inn Lane*

The Royal Albert Railway Bridge Striding across the Tamar Estuary

3.7 AGNES, WIDOW OF THOMAS TAPSON OF BUCKLAND MONACHORUM

Thomas Tapson married Agnes Palmer at Buckland Monachorum on 9 May 1597 (page 2). Just under nine months later, on 2 February 1597, their son Thomas was baptized and then, on 8 October 1600, their daughter Julian (pages 4, 5). On 16 August 1632 and 28 May 1634 were buried Thomas Tapson Senior and Thomas Tapson Junior (page 7)[+], Agnes's father-in-law and husband.

On 6 February 1638/9 a Bill of Complaint against Agnes Tapson was presented in Chancery (PRO C2/CHASI/C88/49) on behalf of the orator *Symon Crymes Gent, a student at the University of Oxen (being an infant under the age of one and twenty years) by Peter Saynthill Esq (his Guardian)*, in which the orator claimed that William Crymes Esq., late of Buckland Monachorum (the orator's father) had bequeathed to him, as his youngest son, Bickham and three closes of land known as Culver Parke, and these were now (unlawfully) in the occupation of Agnes Tapson, widow. [The Crymes family were the lords of the manor of Buckland Monachorum.][•]

In her Answer Agnes claimed that Ellize Crymes leased the properties to John Palmer the elder and his children John Palmer the younger, Agnes Palmer (so then named) and Susan Palmer, and she quoted indented deeds of 1 June 26 Elizabeth (1584) and 15 February 26 Elizabeth (1584/5) in which the sixty-year leases were granted to run successively, and not jointly, for a yearly rent of 7 shillings and 2 pence for Bickham and 12 shillings for Culver Parke. The defendant quoted the burial entries from the Buckland Monachorum parish register of John Palmer the father (buried 11 December 1596), John Palmer the younger (buried 11 February 1596/7) and Susan Palmer (buried 15 November 1596), and claimed that she still had a term of 18 years or more of unexpired lease. [Assuming that after 11 February 1596/7 Agnes had a full term of 60 years of lease remaining, it would have terminated on 11 February 1656/7 — just 18 years from the date of the Bill of Complaint.]

[•]The manor of Buckland Monachorum was bought in 1546 by Richard Chrymes, a London haberdasher, for £1451 - 9 - 10, and the family set up their manor house at Crapstone Barton.

[+]See Appendix VI (Addenda).

3.20 WILLIAM TAPSON, SHIP'S CARPENTER

The Commission and Warrant Books of the Admiralty contain three references to William Tapson (PRO ADM6/13):

(Fo. 113)

Warrant dated the 5 May 1726 for
Will: Tapson of good Testimony to be Carpenter of the Alborough
former removed [i.e. the former carpenter of the ship] *to the Canterbury*

(Fo. 118)

Warrant dated the 2nd August 1726 for
William Tapson Carpr of the Alborough to be Carpr of the Gosport
former removed to the Salisbury

(Fo. 119)

Warrant dated the 13 Sept 1726 for
William Tapson Carpr of the Gosport to be in the St Albans
former deceased

As a ship's Carpenter William was a warrant officer (page 28); these warrants confirm this. It was probably the same William who made his will whilst serving on the Royal Oak:

The Will of William Tapson dated 18 May 1744

In the Name of God Amen I William Tapson Carpenter now belonging to his Majesty's Ship Royal Oak being in Bodily health and of sound and disposing mind and memory and Considering the perrils and dangers of the Seas and other uncertaintys of this Transitory life (do for avoiding Controversies after my decease) make publish and declare this my last Will and Testament in manner following (that is to say) First I recommend my Soul to God that gave it and my Body I commit to the Earth or Sea as it shall please God to Order and as for and concerning all my Wordly Estate I give bequeath and dispose thereof as followeth that is to all such Wages Sum and Sums of money Lands Tenements Goods Chattels and Estate whatsoever as shall be any ways due owing or belonging unto me at the time of my decease I do give devise and bequeath the same unto my well beloved Friend Thomas Lines Barnes now belonging to his Majesty's said Ship and I do hereby nominate and appoint my said Friend Thomas Executor of this my last Will and Testament and deeds of Gift by me at any time heretofore made And I do ordain and ratify these presents to stand and be for and as my only last Will and Testament In Witness whereof to this my said Will I have set my Hand and Seal the Eighteenth day of May Anno Dom 1744 and in the eighteenth Year of the Reign of his Majesty King George the Second over Great Britain etc. *William Tapson*

William's will (PRO PROB11/767 Fo. 216) was proved at London on 17 January 1748 in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury by the oath of Thomas Lines Barnes, to whom administration was granted. Two members of the Carpenter's Crew of the Royal Oak, Joseph Cornwall, Blockmaker, and Edward Fleet, Shipwright, appeared in the Court to swear on oath that the signature was that of William Tapson, and stated that they had been present and had heard the will read when the testator, whom they knew well, had signed it.

The Treasurers' Pay Book for the Royal Oak (PRO ADM33/411) contains the entry:

Time of Entry	*Name*	*Quality*	*Time of Discharge*	*Where*	*Slopsellers Cloaths*	*Beds*
21 Sep 1741	*Willm Topsam*	*Carpr Crew*	*DD 24 July 1746*	*Gibr Bay*	*4 - 11 - 6*	*0 - 11 - 0*

Tobacco	*2 Mon. Advan. & 2 Mon. in Six*	*Chest*	*Hospital*	*Full Wages*	*Neat Wages*	*When Paid*
0 - 15 - 10	*2 - 7 - 0*	*3 - 3 - 3*	*1 - 11 - 8*	*78 - 18 - 6*	*65 - 18 - 3*	*27 April 1749*

A final column had the entry *To whom paid: Tho Lines Barnes Exr.*

Whereas the William who had joined the St. Albans some twenty years earlier had been, as the Carpenter of that ship, a warrant officer, the William who died on the Royal Oak in 1746 was merely one of the Carpenter's Crew; the implication, perhaps, is that they were two different Williams. However, since a fresh warrant was required for each voyage, it is possible that after serving on the St. Albans William may have been unable to obtain a further warrant as a Carpenter and so had to serve in a more humble capacity, in much the same way that, when not offered a fresh commission, Lieutenant Richard Tapson Junior served as a Midshipman Extraordinary on the Reserve (page 28) and Lieutenant George Tapson served as a Midshipman Extraordinary on the Dorsetshire (page 97), a ranking with the status of warrant officer rather than commission officer.

The Captain's Log (PRO ADM51/813) of the Royal Oak, which had a complement of 480 men, describes the circumstances of William's death:

> *Friday 25 July 1746 First part Fair Middle Foggy Latter Hazey*
> *..... the people Employed pumping the Ship, One of the Carpenters, going down the Well to Sound ....?.... he fell, and Several Others going to his Assistance fell Allso, 4 of which Died, viz ..?.. Gilbert, W^m^ Austin, W^m^ Tapsham and Ralph Biggs a mariner ....*

This entry is dated the day after the date of William's death as recorded in the Treasurers' Pay Book (page 101).

Plymouth Sound

The entrance, protected by the inner breakwater, from Plymouth Sound to the estuary of the river Plym (the Cattewater) and to the old port of Plymouth (Sutton Pool). Plymouth was called *Sutone* in the Domesday Survey of 1086.

who married Agnes's younger sister, and that John Tapson married some other Katherine Ebsworthy. Doubt is however thrown on this assumption by the records of a suit in Chancery (PRO C5/384/47) of 1652 in which the defendants, Agnes and Wilmot Ebsworthy, two of Peter's sisters, state that their brother's wife, Katherine, was the daughter of Paul Ebsworthy. If they were correct, then it must have been John Tapson who married Agnes's younger sister. [The Bridestowe bishop's transcripts for 1624 (or 25?) record that *Willmot the daughter of Peter Ebsworthy gent and Susanne his wife was christened the 18th of July*; her sister Agnes must also have been born after the 1620 Visitation, since she too is not included in the Ebsworthy pedigree (page 105).]

Two Buckland Monachorum baptismal entries (page 5) record:

3 Feb 1635 Robertus filius Nicholai Tapson
10 Oct 1638 Katherina filia Nicholai Tapson

and since no other Nicholas Tapson of the appropriate age to be the father appears in the records (a Nicholas Tapson had been buried in 1543), it seems probable that these were the children of Nicholas and Agnes. The burial on 22 August 1634 (page 7) of *Infans Nicholai Tapson* [the child of Nicholas Tapson] must have been that of their first child born eighteen months after the marriage and dying before being named. The names given to the two surviving children support the assumption that they were children of Nicholas and Agnes, since Robert was the name of Nicholas's father and eldest brother and Katherine was the name of Agnes's mother and sister; further evidence will appear later (chapter 5). It would seem that the newly-wed couple settled in Buckland Monachorum after their marriage, leaving Alexander to continue managing his estates whilst Nicholas raised money by working, perhaps, on his father's land, the final instalment not being due until 29 October 1641.

Double Waters, Buckland Monachorum

The confluence of the rivers Walkham and Tavy lies in deep woodland to the north of the village.

4.5 MANOR COURT ROLLS

It has been estimated that by the time of the Domesday Book (1086) about 1,500 barons had been granted lands by the King, which they held directly of him in return for providing knights for his service. These barons, *the tenants-in-chief* of the King, their *supreme lord*, in turn granted estates to the knights, who held them indirectly of the Crown through the barons, their *mesne lords*. [A *mesne lord* is a landlord, not necessarily a titled person, *in the middle*, being himself both tenant of a superior lord and lord of a subordinate tenant.] A knight, in his turn, would carve out of his estate other estates to be held by other freeholders as his tenants who, in their turn, could repeat the process, and so on. Thus a free tenant might hold his land of the Crown through many mesne lords. An estate carved out in this way was known as a *manor* and the mesne lord as the *lord of the manor*. It has been said that two free tenants at least were necessary to create a manor. Thus a manor contained several free tenants, who held their land of the lord of the manor either by knight service or by payment of rent, and villeins, who held their land by socage (labour service on the demesne — the land which the lord of the manor reserved to his own use); in the course of time both knight service and socage were replaced by money payments (page 104). Practically every manor was created before 1290, the year in which subinfeudation was effectively brought to an end by the Statute of *Quia Emptores*.

The manor was the unit of local government, and matters both administrative and judicial were dealt with by the *manor court*, a regular meeting of the tenantry presided over by the lord of the manor or by his representative who often had received some legal training. One aspect of the work of a manor court — to administer the agriculture of the manor, the lord's and tenants' rights and duties, changes in occupancy, and disputes between tenants — was known as *Court Baron*; *Court Leet* dealt with the election of officials, disturbances of the peace and other disciplinary matters. (By the Eighteenth Century the functions of the Court Leet had been taken over by the Parish Vestry and by the Justices of the Peace.) All tenants were obliged to attend the manor court, which was run on strictly formal lines according to the custom of the manor and was responsible for ensuring the proper adherence to the rules of the manor regulating the rights and duties not only of the tenants but also of the lord. Customs varied from manor to manor, but the over-riding principle was that justice should be done by the manor court, not by the lord of the manor; by the Thirteenth Century treatises were being written on manor court procedure.

A session of the court began with the election of a jury (*juratores*), excuses for absence (*essonia*), and absences without a valid excuse (*defalte*) for which a fine was imposed. The records of the court were written in Latin on parchment rolls. A villein, on entering into a tenancy, was given a copy of the court's record of the fact as his title deed, and this type of tenure became known as *copyhold* (page 104). The lord of the manor appointed, from outside the tenantry, the *bailiff*, who was his estate manager. All other manorial officials were elected annually at a session of the manor court: the *reeve*, the chief representative of the tenants with whom the bailiff dealt; the *hayward*, responsible for the maintenance of hedges; the *beadle*, having disciplinary duties; *the constable*, responsible for what would now be regarded as police matters; the *ale-taster*, whose task was to check that ale and beer were being sold in the correct measures and at the qualtiy and price laid down; and two *affeerors*, whose function was to assess the amount of each fine imposed by the court.

Frankpledge was the system of mutual suretyship that required all males in the manor aged 12 and over to belong to a *tithing*, a group, originally, of 10 men and their families who were held corporately responsible for the good behaviour of each other; if a member of a tithing was accused of an offence and failed to appear to answer the charge, the other members of the tithing were fined. The elected representative of the tithing was the *tithingman*, responsible for presenting to the manor court all misdemeanours committed by members of families within his tithing. By the Fifteenth Century the system was breaking down, and the term *tithingman* came to mean an official with wider disciplinary functions within the manor; such was Richard Tapson (page 12).

An insight into the lives of the tinners of the Stannaries at that time is provided by another suit in Star Chamber brought by *Sir Frauncis Bacon Knight Attorney general* on behalf of the Crown (PRO STAC8/20/25). Sir Francis (1561-1626), philosopher and man of letters, became Attorney General in 1613 and was appointed Lord Chancellor of England in 1618. In his Bill of Complaint he notes that the King is *seized as of Fee* of all tin in Devon and Cornwall, which *hath alwayes bynne accompted a Royall Comoditie*, yielding *a very greate yerely Revenewe*; the King is likewise seized of the rights of first buying, first selling, and transportation, of all tin and pewter. He also notes that no-one is permitted to transport out of the Realm any tin or pewter. Sir Francis then informs the Court that *by Charters heretofore granted* to the *Tynners of your Majesties said Counties of Devon and Cornwall and by the Lawes and Customes of the said Stanneries the said Tynners and Blowers of Tynne ought to sett the marke of the Tynner who shall be Owner of the same Tynne upon every Block of Tynne And also the marke of the Blowing* [casting] *howse where the same tynne was blowen* and *ought to bring all the Tynne by them blowen and made to the severall Coynadge howses .... to have the stampe or seale aunciently appoynted for that purpose sett and stamped .... And to pay your Majestie Coynadge Custome due for the same before the same can or ought to be sould*. If this was not done, then the buyer and the seller should be *punished according to the said Lawes and Customes of the Stanneries by fyne and ymprisonment*.

Nineteen names are then listed, *being all Tynners and Owners of Blowing howses*; then comes another long list of names, *being all Blowers*, yet another long list, *being all Marchaunts and Buyers of uncoyned Tynne*, and finally a shorter list, *being secrett Caryers and Conveyors of uncoyned Tynne from diverse and sondry Blowing howses*. Sir Francis then presents his complaint: that on the *Tenth day of November in the seaventh yere of your Majesties reign* [1609] the defendants *in secrett manner conningly craftily and unlawfully practised Combyned and Conspired to overthrowe your Majesties said empcon* [preemption] *and sole transportacon of Tynne and pewter*. The *Tynners and Owners of Blowing howses* are again listed with the accusation that they *have at every severall Coynadge charged and directed their Blowers not to sett the owners marke nor the howse marke upon their Tynne .... and have also changed the Blowers and have not kept any Blowers att their Blowing howses above one Coynadge*; nor have they given the names of their blowers to any of the Stannary courts, as they were required to do. The *Blowers* are the next to be listed again with the charge that they *have wrought at diverse and sondry Blowing howses .... and have not sett the marke of the owners of the same Tynne nor of the Blowing howses*. Next it is the turn of the *Marchaunts and Buyers of uncoyned Tynne* to be listed again; the complaint against them is that they have *bought .... of diverse Tynners .... thowsand weight of uncoyned Tynne* which they have *secretly caryed and conveyed into the parts beyond the seas without any lycense from your Majestie* and without paying any dues. Finally the *Caryers and Conveyors of uncoyned Tynne* are again listed and accused that they have *with Carts horses otherwise in packe vessells .... carried uncoyned Tynne .... into diverse and sondry Cellers bottoms of shippes and other secrett places and have hidden the same there untill the same could be secretly conveyed into parts beyond the seas*.

There is no legible date to this Bill of Complaint, but it must have been written soon after Sir Francis became Attorney General in 1613, for the earliest of the six surviving Answers is dated *11 February 11 James* [1613/4]. Of particular interest is the appearance among the list of 19 *Tynners and Owners of Blowing Howses* of the names *William Topsam*, *Richard Topsam* and *Robert Topsam*. In view of the various spellings of the Tapson name already noted, it does at least seem a possibility that they were members of the Tapson family, perhaps even the William, Richard and Robert who were raising families in Buckland Monachorum at that time, although unfortunately the parishes of the defendants are not given in the Bill of Complaint. From the earlier Star Chamber suit we know that Robert Tapson of Freesabeare, in partnership with John Tapson and others, was already dealing in white tin (refined tin metal) by 1600, so it is feasible that by 1609 he was owner, or maybe joint owner, of a blowing howse. Perhaps here we have a clue to the apparent wealth of Robert Tapson of Freesabeare: that he did not confine his activities to farming. If William, Richard and Robert presented Answers to the Court, they have not survived, so we cannot look to them for further evidence and can only continue to speculate.....

The surviving coinage rolls afford further evidence of the involvement of the Tapson family in the west Devon tin industry. Except where otherwise stated, the following are included as presenting tin for coinage at Tavistock in both the June and the September rolls of the years listed:*

1550				John (June)	
1595	Robert	Richard	Thomas	John	
1610	Robert	Richard		John	Christopher
1625	Robert				Elizeus (June)
1627	Robert	Richard	Thomas	John (Sept)	Elizeus
1628	Robert	Richard	Thomas	John	
1629	Robert		Thomas		
1642					Elizeus

Robert would again seem to be Robert Tapson of Freesabeare, who died in 1637. Probably the Richard presenting tin in 1595 and 1610 was the tithingman, who died in 1619, and Christopher his eldest son, who died in 1617 (page 78); but there are several possibilities for the later Richard. The Thomas presenting tin in 1595 may have been Agnes's father-in-law, who died in 1632, or her husband, who died in 1634 (page 80); there are several possibilities for the later Thomas, just as there are for the various John Tapsons (clearly there were more than one), though the John presenting tin in 1550 was probably one of those who paid tax at Buckland Monachorum in 1543-5 (page 15). It is likely that Elizeus was the *Ellize Tapson* who died in 1658 (page 89).

In 1595 the tin which Richard presented was the third largest amount for June and the second largest amount for September, so he seems to have been in the tin business in a big way; and in October 1600 he represented Tavistock Stannary at the Crockerntor Great Court (or Parliament) as a jurate, an office discharged in October 1688 by *Robert Tapson Gent*, perhaps *Mr Robert Tapson* buried at Sampford Spiney in 1721, and in September 1703 by *Robert Tapson jun. Gent*, perhaps his son who moved first to Drewsteignton and then to Ilsington (page 91).•

Buckland Monachorum Church with its Crocketed Pinnacles

*PRO E101/273/16 for 1550, E101/279/9 for 1595, E101/281/1 for 1610, E101/283 for 1625,27,28,29, E101/287/1 for 1642.
•See Appendix VI (Addenda).

Bridestowe Church

The Norman arch from an earlier church now forms the gateway to the churchyard.

Bridestowe Baptisms from 1696 to 1900

(Family A)	22 Apr 1698	*Ann (1)*	***Robert Tapson & Ann***	*5.14*
	23 Apr 1699	*Robert (2)*		
	25 Dec 1700	*Nicholas (3)*		
	8 Dec 1702	*William (4)*		
	24 Jan 1704	*Katherine (5)*		
(Family B)	20 Jan 1703	*Nicholas (6)*	***Nicholas Tapson & Ann***	*5.2*
	?1 Jul 1706	*Ebsworthy (7)*		
	26 May 1708	*Ann (8)*		
	25 Sep 1711	*Mary (9)*		
	10 Aug 1714	*Ebsworthy (10)*		
	8 Jan 1717	*Katherine (11)*		
	4 Jan 1720	*Robert (12)*		
(Family C)	8 Jan 1721	*Robert (13)*	***Robert Tapson & Orange***	*5.14*
	9 Feb 1723	*Anne (14)*		
	23 Jan 1725	*William (15)*		
	30 Jun 1728	*Miriam (16)*		
	4 Apr 1731	*Catherine (17)*		
	10 Feb 1733	*Elizabeth (18)*		
(Family D)	25 Jun 1727	*Henry (19)*	***Nicholas Tapson & Margaret***	*5.2*
	8 Sep 1728	*John (20)*		
	15 Feb 1729	*Nicholas (21)*		
	2 Apr 1733	*Ebsworthy (22)*		
	5 Nov 1734	*Robert (23)*		
	20 Apr 1737	*Anne (24)*		
(Family E)	13 Jan 1738	*Ebsworthy (25)*	***Ebsworthy Tapson & Dionysia***	*5.3*
	18 Oct 1746	*Elizabeth (26)*		
	4 Oct 1747	*Nicholas (27)*		
	23 Apr 1750	*Nicholas (28)*		
	6 Jun 1753	*John (29)*		
	20 Jan 1755	*Mary (30)*		
	6 Mar 1758	*Ebsworthy (31)*		
(Family F)	1 Apr 1750	*Mary (32)*	***William Tapson & Susanna***	*5.14*
	15 Mar 1751	*Susanna (33)*		
	8 Jun 1755	*Elizabeth (34)*		
	2 Apr 1758	*William (35)*		
	27 Apr 1760	*Catherine (36)*		
	5 Jun 1763	*Jane (37)*		
	21 Apr 1765	*William (38)*		
	23 Nov 1766	*Robert (39)*		
	23 Nov 1766	*John (40)*		
(Family G)	9 May 1750	*Mary (41)*	***John Tapson & Ann***	*5.8*
	12 Apr 1752	*Ebsworthy (42)*		
	17 Mar 1754	*Ann (43)*		
	30 Mar 1760	*Robert (44)*		
	1 Nov 1761	*William (45)*		
	17 Mar 1765	*George (46)*		
	1 Apr 1768	*George (47)*		

RELEASE Indenture of four parts dated 4 November 1801 between

1. Ebsworthy Tapson of Okehampton, yeoman
   Ann his wife
2. Nicholas Tapson of Launceston, yeoman, eldest son of Ebsworthy and Ann
3. Henry Jole of Okehampton, gentleman
4. Ann Hiern of Launceston, spinster

Quotes the Lease and Release of 19 and 20 December 1782 [the first mortgage] and states that Ebsworthy Tapson the father died *on or about 16 June 1784* [this was the date of his burial] *intestate, leaving the said Ebsworthy Tapson party to the said indenture and his Eldest Son and Heir at Law who thereupon became seized of the said Messuage or Tenement subject to the said Mortgage*.
Recites the indentures of 31 May 1799, 21 December 1799, 21 October 1800 and 20 February 1801 [the second, third, fourth and fifth mortgages] and states that Ann Hiern had contracted and agreed with Ebsworthy Tapson and Nicholas Tapson for the absolute purchase of the Fee Simple and Inheritance in possession of the messuage, tenement, wood and premises for £1000.
Witnesses that Ebsworthy Tapson and Nicholas Tapson now owe Henry Jole £622 and that, for this sum paid by Ann Hiern, Henry Jole acquits Ann Hiern, Ebsworthy, Ann and Nicholas Tapson and their heirs. Witnesses that Ann Hiern had paid the £378 residue to Ebsworthy, Ann and Nicholas Tapson for Little Bidlake otherwise Lower Bidlake (late in the occupation of William Rule as tenant from year to year) and also Brimbleham Wood otherwise Little Bidlake otherwise Ebsworthy.
Witnesses that Ebsworthy, Ann and Nicholas Tapson promise to levy Fines unto Ann Hiern of the messuage, tenement and premises hereby released *by the name or names of one messuage, one barn, one stable, one shippon, three gardens, two orchards, twenty acres of land, twenty acres of meadow, twenty acres of pasture, fifty acres of wood, fifty acres of furze and heath and common of pasture for all manner of cattle with the appurtenances* in Easter (or Little or Lower) Bidlake and Ebsworthy (or Brimbleham) Wood.

Although Ebsworthy Tapson Senior was 69 when he died, we learn from this Release that he had made no will; neither had he made any marriage settlement on his only surviving son, Ebsworthy Tapson Junior, as is noted in the margin of the *Abstract of Title* (page 144). Ebsworthy had one more property to sell, also at the time leased to a tenant (DRO 189M Add 2/T44, 45):

Sale of Cross Lanes Cottage and Blacksmith's Shop (Abstract)

LEASE Indenture dated 20 May 1804 between

1. Ebsworthy Tapson of Okehampton, yeoman
   Ann his wife
   Nicholas Tapson of Shebbear, yeoman, eldest son of Ebsworthy and Ann
2. Ann Hiern of Dunheved, otherwise Launceston, gentlewoman

Witnesses that Ebsworthy, Ann and Nicholas Tapson, in consideration of the sum of five shillings to each of them paid by Ann Hiern, bargain and sell to her for one year all that Messuage and Tenement consisting of a Cottage House, Blacksmith's Shop and Garden or Orchard and Appurtenances thereto belonging called Cross Lanes adjoining to the Estate of Little Bidlake and formerly part thereof and now in the occupation of James Hall as Lessee Tenant.
RELEASE Indenture dated 21 May 1804 between

1. Ebsworthy Tapson of Okehampton, yeoman
   Ann his wife
   Nicholas Tapson of Shebbear, yeoman, eldest son of Ebsworthy and Ann
2. Ann Hiern of Dunheved, otherwise Launceston, gentlewoman

Witnesses that Ebsworthy, Ann and Nicholas Tapson, in consideration of £52 10s 0d paid to them by Ann Hiern, bargain and sell unto Ann Hiern all that Messuage and Tenement consisting of a Cottage House, Blacksmith's Shop and Garden or Orchard and Appurtenances called Cross Lanes.
Refers to a Lease dated 10 July 1787 by Ebsworthy Tapson, then of Bridestowe, yeoman, unto James Hall, blacksmith, for 99 years determinable on the deaths of James Hall and Martha his wife for a rent of five shillings annually.

The 1802 land tax assessment shows that both Little Bidlake and Great Bidlake were now owned by *Mrs Herring & Hierns*, so it would seem that these two ladies had reunited the original Bidlake estate. Although Ebsworthy and his eldest son, Nicholas, were each given the description *yeoman* in the abovementioned indentures, this must by now have been no more than a courtesy title. In these indentures Nicholas's address is given variously as Okehampton, Launceston (Cornwall) and Shebbear (near Holsworthy in north-west Devon), which suggests that he was moving around to find employment. He eventually returned to Bridestowe where his children were baptized; in their baptismal entries Nicholas in described as a *labourer* (page 131).

A report for the 1805 Midsummer Sessions of the Devon General Quarter Sessions (DRO QS1/22 page 287), under the entry ..... *ordered that the Treasurer do pay the following sums (to wit)*, includes the item:

To Ebsworthy Tapson for conveying Baggage from Oakhampton to Exeter & other places *£1 10s 3d.*

Whilst the Ebsworthy referred to in this item could have been #31, he is more likely to have been #50, the second son of #31 who subsequently became a coachman (page 270).

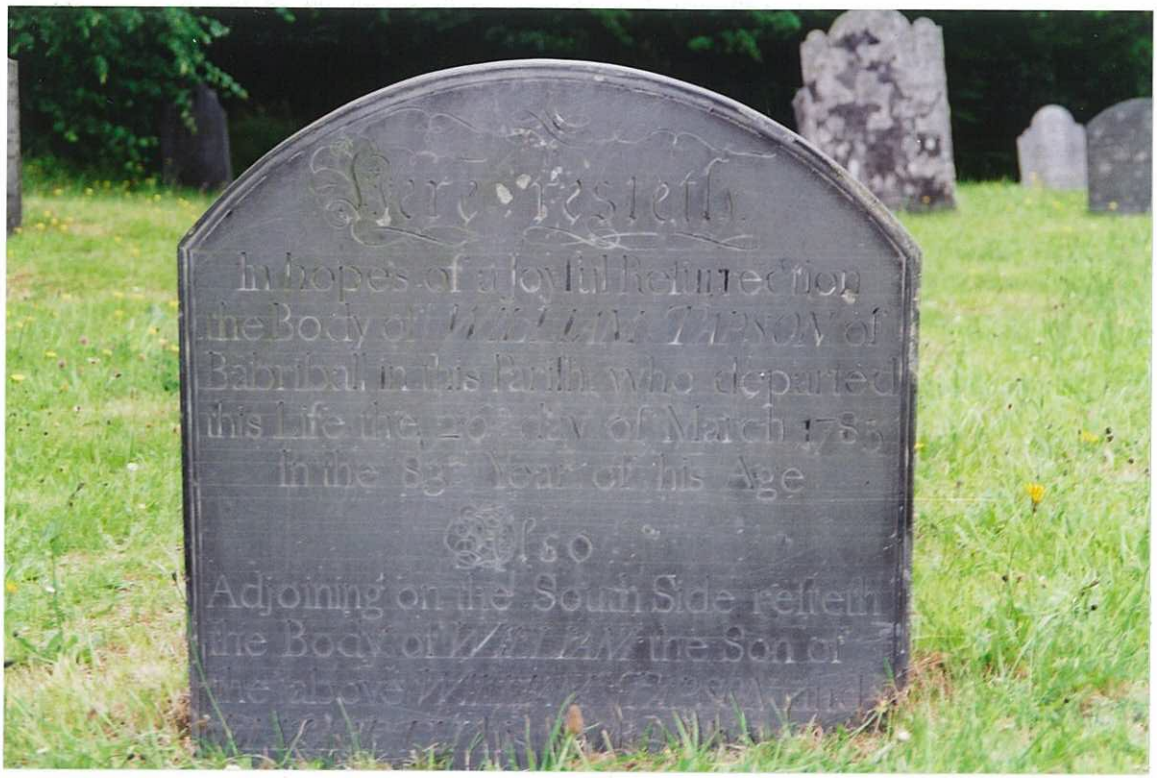
An entry in the register of the Ebenezer Wesleyan Burial Ground, Plymouth:

15 May 1831 Ann Tapson Clarence Street, Plymouth 75

probably records the burial of Ebsworthy's wife. If she was Ann (*née* Tapson) #43 (page 141), she would have been 77 at the time of this burial. [In the days before birth certificates were introduced, there was often considerable confusion about a person's exact age.] All the other Tapson burials in the Ebenezer Burial Ground were of the family of John Tapson #51, the third son of Ebsworthy and Ann (page 278), so it seems likely that Ann moved to Plymouth to be near her son.

The Headstone of Nicholas Tapson who died in 1737

The Headstone of William Tapson who died in 1785



Stowford Burials from 1707 to 1900

29	*Apr*	*1762*	*William, the son of William Tapson & Elizabeth*	*6.2*
22	*Jan*	*1773*	*Elizabeth, the wife of William Tapson*	*6.3*
29	*Mar*	*1785*	*William Tapson*	*6.2*
8	*Nov*	*1795*	*Charles, the son of Robert Tapson & Ann*	*6.3*
9	*Oct*	*1796*	*Robert Tapson*	*6.3*
16	*Nov*	*1808*	*Robert Tapson of Thrushelton, 26*	*6.4*
26	*Feb*	*1810*	*Robert Tapson of Thrushelton, 2*	*6.4*
3	*Oct*	*1813*	*Emlin Tapson, Spry Town, Stowford, 11*	*6.10*
20	*Oct*	*1813*	*Nicholas Tapson, Spry Town, Stowford, 59*	*6.10*
12	*Jun*	*1814*	*Mary Tapson, Spry Town, 22*	*6.11*
30	*Dec*	*1814*	*Mary Croker Tapson, Spry Town, 7 months*	*6.11*
28	*Oct*	*1827*	*Mary Ann Tapson, Tamerton Foliot, 33*	*6.9*
5	*Oct*	*1830*	*John Tapson, Tamerton Foliot, 43*	*6.9*
16	*Oct*	*1835*	*Mary Tapson, Parish Land, Stowford, 75*	*6.10*
23	*Sep*	*1845*	*Ann Tapson Launceston, Cornwall, 56*	*6.14*
6	*May*	*1852*	*John Tapson, Down Park, Stowford, 40*	*6.12*
1	*Feb*	*1855*	*Jenny Tapson, Stowford Lane, 60(61?)*	*6.14*
22	*Jul*	*1856*	*Catherine Tapson, Thrushelton, 75*	*6.4*
30	*Jan*	*1859*	*William Tapson, Launceston, Cornwall, 66*	*6.14*
30	*May*	*1859*	*John Tapson, Stowford Barton, 71*	*6.11*
4	*May*	*1862*	*Elizabeth Tapson, Stowford Barton, 49*	*6.12*
24	*Jun*	*1862*	*John Tapson, Cannon Barn, Thrushelton, 58*	*6.5*
3	*Jul*	*1862*	*John Tapson, Launceston, 18*	*6.12*

6.2 WILLIAM TAPSON OF STOWFORD, YEOMAN (B#4)

The story of the Tapsons of Stowford actually begins in the parish of Marystow ten years before the earliest Tapson entry in the Stowford parish registers. Marystow is the parish immediately to the south of Stowford parish; its early registers are quite difficult to read, but the bishop's transcripts which survive are highly legible. Between 1700 and 1750 these bishop's transcripts survive for 1708-9, 1712-13, 1715, 1719, 1721-30, 1732-37, 1743-50.

Marriages at Marystow from 1700 to 1750

24 Apr 1742 ***William Tapson & Elizabeth Redman****(?) by banns*
3 Nov 1747 ***John Tapson & Elizabeth Woodman*** *sojourners in this Parish by banns*
18 Apr 1748 ***John Skelly & Miriam Tapson*** *by banns*

Baptisms at Marystow from 1700 to 1750

29? Jan 1742	*William*	*son of William Tapson & Elizabeth*
12 Jan 1744	*Mary*	*dau of William Tapson & Elizabeth*
24 Mar 1746	*Elizabeth*	*dau of William Tapson & Elizabeth*
6 Jul 1749	*John*	*son of John Tapson & Elizabeth*
9 Nov 1749	*Anne*	*dau of William Tapson & Elizabeth*

Burials at Marystow from 1700 to 1750

13 Jun 1747 Mary Tapson

By 1752 William and Elizabeth with their children, William, Elizabeth and Anne (Mary having already died), had moved to Stowford, where Robert, Nicholas and Ebsworthy were born and where their son William died at the age of 19. William seems quickly to have become involved in village affairs at Stowford: the bishop's transcripts were signed *William Tapson Churchwarden* for the years beginning Ladyday 1753, Ladyday 1760 and Ladyday 1761. William died in 1785. It will be shown below (page 167) that William was Bridestowe #4, marrying at the age of 39, having his last child when he was 57, and dying at the age of 82.

The identity of John Tapson who was married in 1747 is discussed later (page 351). It seems very probable that the Miriam who was married in 1748 was Bridestowe #16, then nearly 20 years old (page 159). Miriam may already have been living in Marystow, which is less than 7 miles from Bridestowe village, at the time of her wedding, for she was not described as a sojourner; she may have gone there to join her uncle, William #4, whilst her father, Robert #2, remained in Bridestowe. John Skelly and Miriam continued to live in Marystow after their wedding; the parish register records the baptisms of their children. The name *Miriam Tapson* is encountered again in another marriage entry, this time in the register of Okehampton church and nearly 70 years earlier:

17 Jun 1679 ***Roger Lacy*** *of Okehampton &* ***Miriam Tapson*** *of Briddistow*

That this Miriam came from Bridestowe suggests that she may have been a daughter of Nicholas and Agnes, born after they had moved to Bridestowe from Buckland Monachorum some time before 1641 (page 115); or she may even have been a daughter of their son Robert baptized in February 1635/6, if he had married early. It is probable that the Miriam married at Marystow was named after the Miriam married at Okehampton; if so, and if the earlier Miriam was a descendant of Nicholas and Agnes, then it becomes even more likely that Robert, the father of Bridestowe Family A, was also a descendant of Nicholas and Agnes (page 161).

Even after William had moved to Stowford he maintained links with Marystow: the earliest land tax assessments for that parish, of 1780 to 1784, list him as the occupier of land at *Dipfordtown* (probably the hamlet of Dippertown shown on modern Ordnance Survey maps, about one and a half miles south of Stowford village):

Tregada is a hamlet about a mile south-west of Lawhitton village. There is no mention of John, Elizabeth's youngest child, in the 1851 census; he was certainly not included in the return for Combeford (PRO HO107/1899 Fo. 415), the home of Elizabeth's parents, William and Joanna Lang. The inevitable conclusion must be that John was already dead.

Slater's 1852 Directory, under *Shopkeepers & Dealers in Groceries & Sundries*, lists:

Tapson Elizabeth, Race Hill

in the Launceston section; and Kelly's 1856 Directory for that town lists her under *Traders* as:

Tapson Elizabeth (Mrs), Shopkeeper, Race Hill

By 1861 Elizabeth seems to have given up her shop, for the 1861 census return (PRO RG9/1520 Fo. 68) for Lawhitton shows her, her younger daughter and her mother living at Tregada:

Tregada					
Richard Lang	*Head*	*Mar*	*75*	*Yeoman*	*Cornwall, S.Petherwin*
Phillipa Lang	*Wife*	*Mar*	*70*		*„ Lezant*
Joannah Lang	*Sisterlaw*	*Wid*	*74*	*Late Farmer's Wife*	*„ Lezant*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Niece*	*Wid*	*47*	*Excise Officer's Wife*	*„ Lawhitton*
Elizabeth Tapson	*GreatNiece*	*Un*	*14*	*Scholar*	*Nottinghamshire, Carlton*

Richard Lang died on 4 May 1863,• and the 1871 census return for Lawhitton (PRO RG10/2225 Fo. 75) lists only Elizabeth and her elder daughter at Tregada, so presumably her aunt and mother had also died in the decade since the previous census:

Tregada					
Elizabeth Tapson	*Head*	*Wid*	*57*		*Cornwall, Lawhitton*
Ann Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*30*	*Draper's Assistant*	*Devon, Lifton*

The burial of Elizabeth, John's widow, is recorded in the register of the Launceston Wesleyan Chapel:

4 Oct 1880 Elizabeth Tapson Tregada 67

The only surviving son of John and Elizabeth was married at Plymouth St. Andrew:

8 Jan 1863 ***William Lang Tapson*** *25 Bachelor Solicitor's Clerk Parish of Wednesbury, Staffordshire*
(Father: John Tapson, Exciseman)
Helen Treleaven *23 Spinster 1 St Michaels Terrace*
(Father: James Treleaven, Currier)
by Banns in the presence of John Congdon & Mary Frances Treleaven

The couple returned to Wednesbury, where the births were registered of Edith Elizabeth (1864, Q1), Amelia T. (1866, Q1), Helen Treleaven (1868, Q3), Emily Maude (1871, Q1), John Lang (1872, Q4), Jemima (1874, Q2), William Reginald (1875, Q4) and Harold James (1880, Q1); with the exception of Jemima, whose death was registered in 1874, Q3, they are all included in the 1881 census return for Wednesbury (PRO RG11/2855 Fo. 27):

71 Stafford St					
Wm L. Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*43*	*Rate Collector*	*Devon, Lifton*
Ellen M. Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*41*		*Cornwall, Launceston*
Edith E. Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*17*	*Clerk*	*Staffs, Wednesbury*
Amelia T. Tapson	*Dau*		*15*	*Scholar*	*„ „*
Ellen T. Tapson	*Dau*		*12*	*„*	*„ „*
Emily Maud Tapson	*Dau*		*10*	*„*	*„ „*
John L. Tapson	*Son*		*8*	*„*	*„ „*
Wm Reg. Tapson	*Son*		*5*		*„ „*
Harrold Jas. Tapson	*Son*		*1*		*„ „*
Hannah Done	*Serv*	*Un*	*23*	*Domestic Serv*	*„ Darlaston*

The birth of Mary Ethel was registered in 1881, Q4, and her death in 1882, Q3. In about 1884* the family emigrated to Illinois, U.S.A., where one of Helen's brothers was already living; William Lang, facing redundancy in England, already had a position lined up for him in Chicago, where the family moved into a house in Washington Boulevard.•

•See Appendix VI (Addenda).

*Reported by Lois Cech of California, a descendant of William Lang Tapson.

6.9 JOHN TAPSON OF TAMERTON FOLIOT, BUTCHER

John, the third son of Robert and Ann, was married at Maker, the parish in the extreme south-east corner of Cornwall, across the Tamar estuary from Plymouth:

23 Oct 1809 ***John Tapson*** *Bachelor of y^e^ Parish of Thrushelton &*
Mary Ann Chowen *Spinster of this Parish*
by Licence, in the presence of John Doidge & Richard Lobb(?)

A Mary Ann Chowen had been baptized at Maker on 1 June 1789, the daughter of Richard Chowen and Dolly (neé Chubb); she would have been 20 at the time of this marriage, and John nearly 23.

Tamerton Foliot, where John and Mary Ann finally settled, is the parish immediately to the south-west of Buckland Monachorum parish, over 16 miles south of Stowford. They seem not to have had any children: certainly none was baptized at either Stowford or Tamerton Foliot. *Mary Ann Tapson, Tamerton Foliot* was buried at Stowford on 28 October 1827; her age is clearly recorded in the parish register as 33. If this was correct she would have married at the age of 15, which is quite possible because until 1929 a girl could marry at the age of 12 and a boy at 14. [Since 1929 the lower age limit for both boys and girls has been set at 16.] However, the Mary Ann Chowen born in 1789 would have been 38, in line with her headstone inscription that she was in her 39th year. On 5 October 1830, three years after his wife, *John Tapson, Tamerton Foliot* was buried at Stowford; his age, 43, is correctly recorded. Their headstone gives their address as *Webbers* in Tamerton Foliot.

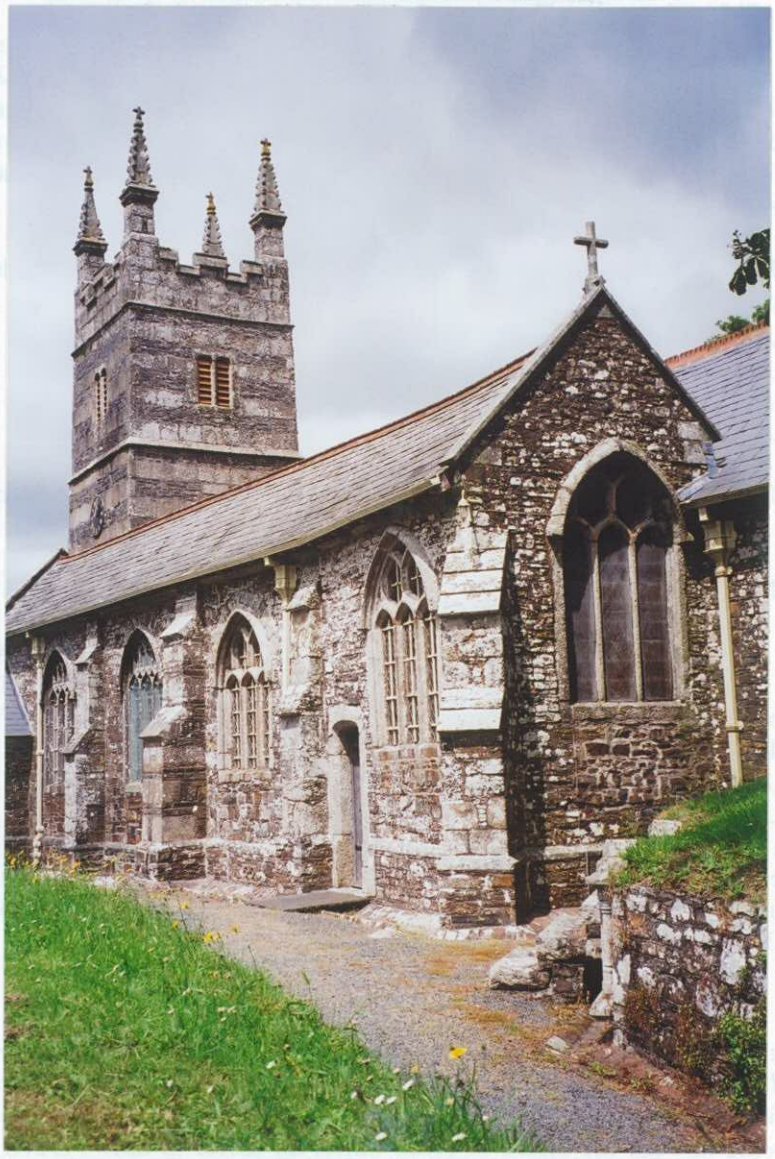
In the *Calendars of Principal Probate Records of the Principal Registry of the Bishop of Exeter* (DRO), edited by Miss Olive Moger before these records were destroyed, appears:

19 Nov 1830 John Tapson of Tamerton Foliot, butcher, to William Tapson of Launceston, carpenter, his brother

This brief entry, dated to the month following John's burial, provides further confirmation that he was a son of Robert and Ann; the beneficiary of his will would have been his only surviving brother, so adding weight to the belief that he and Mary Ann had no children.

Launceston Castle

Stowford Church



The peaceful Stowford village consists only of the church and a few splendid stone-built farmhouses grouped around it, all being of considerable antiquity.

6.24 EBSWORTHY TAPSON OF SOUTH PETHERWIN, YEOMAN

Our first evidence, after his baptism, of the activities of Ebsworthy, the youngest son of William and Elizabeth, is to be found in a baptismal entry in the Lifton parish register:

19 Mar 1786 Ann the base child of Hannah Brown by Ebsworthy Tapson of Stowford

Ebsworthy would have been 26 at the time of this baptism. He did not, however, marry Hannah, for later in the same year his wedding took place in the parish church of South Petherwin:

9 Nov 1786 ***Ebsworthy Tapson*** *a Resident of this Parish &*
Catherine Tapson *of the same Parish Spinster by Licence*
in the presence of James Tapson, John Honder(?) & William Tapson

Catherine was a daughter of James Tapson of South Petherwin and Esther, his second wife (page 341). James Tapson and William Tapson, two of the witnesses at the wedding, must have been Catherine's brothers, because both Catherine's father and Ebsworthy's father were already dead. The village of South Petherwin is about 2 miles south-west of the town of Launceston.

The South Petherwin parish register (page 340) records the baptisms of children of Ebsworthy and Catherine:

12 Feb 1788	*Elizth*	*dau of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson*
30 Jun 1789	*Ann*	*dau of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson*
12 Nov 1793	*Esther*	*dau of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson*
11 Oct 1795	*William*	*son of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson*
20 May 1806	*Robert*	*son of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson*

Ebsworthy's will (below) names two more sons, Ebsworthy and James, but they were not baptized at South Petherwin.

The only land tax assessment for South Petherwin to have survived (CRO AD103/228) is thought to date to about 1800; it has the entry:

TENEMENT	*PROPRIETOR*	*OCCUPIER*	*SUM EXONERATED*
Honiton	*Elizabeth Oliver*	*Ebs Tapson*	*£1 - 13 - 4*

The hamlet of Honiton lies about a mile to the south of South Petherwin village, and is the address given in two burial entries in the South Petherwin register:

2 Dec 1813	*Robert Tapson*	*Honiton*	*8*
17 Jun 1816	*Ebsworthy Tapson*	*Honiton*	*56*

The first of these burial entries refers to the youngest son of Ebsworthy and Catherine, who would have been in his eighth year. The second burial was that of Ebsworthy himself; the age of 56 given in the register confirms that Ebsworthy was William's son, who would have been precisely 56 on that date. Ebsworthy had drawn up a will the year before he died (CRO SO/W/1152):

The Will of Ebsworthy Tapson dated 3 March 1815

I Elworthy Tapson of the Parish of South Petherwin in the County of Cornwall Yeoman being of a perfect and sound mind and memory thanks be to God for the same Calling to mind the Uncertainty of this mortal Life I Ordain this my last will and testament hereby And first bequeath my Soul to almighty God hopeing through the merits of Jesus Christ my savior to have Pardon of all my sins and as for such wordly State as God hath been pleased to bless me with in this Mortal Life I give the same in the following manner and first I give my Daughter Elizabeth Mason the Sum of One Shilling to be paid her in One Year after my Decease Also I give one Shilling to my Daughter Ann Also I give one Shilling to my son Elsworthy and William and I give my Daughter Esther one Shilling and to James I give five Shillings all to be paid in like manner Also I give and bequeath to Catherine my beloved wife whome I make Sole Executrix of this my Last will and testament all that I am posesed of Both quick and Dead moveable and immuveable only saying the Legacias above Menthened and to take Ceare of James the youngist son until he is Capable of taking Ceare of his self and Bind him to some trade if Posiable she Can so Due in witness whereof I have hereinto set My hand and Seal this 3rd Day of March in the year of our Lord 1815 Elsworthy Tapson

trustees to be Executors and Trustees of this my will I direct that my daughters Edith Tapson and Ethel Septima Tapson shall be at liberty to reside in my dwelling house for six calendar months from the date of my decease if they shall wish to do so free of rent and during such time the whole of the income of my estate shall be paid to them for keeping up such house and grounds I give the sum of five hundred pounds to each of my unmarried daughters Edith Ethel Septima and Anna Maria (Minna) who shall be living at my decease I devise and bequeath all the residue of my real and personal estate unto my trustees Upon trust that they shall sell call in and convert into money the same ..... Upon trust to divide the same equally between such of my daughters Grace Elizabeth Soltau Annie Mackilligin Stephana Maria Mackilligin Emily Cuthbert Edith Tapson Mary Alice Helps Ethel Septima Tapson Helen Octavia Bayne-Jardine Anna Maria (Minna) Tapson and Ann Theodosia Hind as shall be living at the time of my death ..... In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand this sixth day of June one thousand nine hundred and ten Alfred J. Tapson

The witnesses to Alfred Joseph's will were Georgius Frederick Youens, *Gardener to Dr Tapson* and Sophie Love, *Cook to Dr Tapson*. Alfred Joseph Tapson died on 2 April 1912 at Heath Lodge, Hillingdon, aged 92. His will was proved on 7 June 1912, when his effects were valued at £9,748 - 10 - 6. We learn from Alfred Joseph's will that all his daughters married except three: Edith, Ethel Septima and Anna Maria (known as Minna).

The Will of Edith Tapson dated 15 March 1926

This is the last Will & Testament of Me, Edith Tapson, (of 52 Western Elms Avenue. Reading.) Spinster. I appoint my sister Ethel Septima Tapson as my Executrix and my Nephew Thomas Edward Bayne-Jardine as Executors of this my Will. I give and bequeath to my said Sister E. S. Tapson my wearing Apparel, Jewelery, Furniture & all other personal effects.
I direct my Executor & Executrix ..... to pay to my said sister, E. S. Tapson the whole of my residuary Estate for her lifetime, & at her death I desire the Residuary estate shall be divided as follows.
Two sixths to my sisters, Mrs Emily Cuthbert Miss Minna Tapson & Mrs A. Theo Hind, and that in the event of any of these pre-deceasing my sister Ethel, the share of the deceased sister or sisters shall be equally divided between the survivors on the death of my Executrix.
As witness my hand this day — Edith Tapson 15th March 1926

Edith wrote her will in her own hand; it was witnessed by Stephana M. Mackilligin, her sister, and by Ella Elmer. Edith died on 5 September 1931 at 52 Western Elms Avenue, Reading; she was 79. Her will was proved on 3 November 1931, effects being valued at £2,462 - 7 - 8.

The Will of Ethel Septima Tapson dated 26 August 1936

I, Ethel Septima Tapson of Criffel, Bracknell, Berkshire, Spinster, ... declare this to be my last Will .... I appoint my nephew Alfred Tapson Bayne-Jardine of Riversdale, Steeple Morden near Royston in the County of Herts and Sidney Ronald Hughes Smith ..... to be the Executors and Trustees hereof ..... I bequeath my household and personal effects to my nephew the said Alfred Tapson Bayne-Jardine upon trust to sell the same ..... and I direct that the proceeds of sale shall form part of my residuary estate and be dealt with as such. I devise and bequeath all my real estate and the residue of my personal estate not hereby or by any Codicil hereto otherwise specifically disposed of in equal shares to my nieces Stephana Maud Stone care of Eric Cowan Esq: 4, Gauteaume Crescent East London South Africa and Mabel Elizabeth Soltan of the China Inland Mission Hospital, Kaifeng, Honan, China (or care of Dr Soltan, High Garth, Nayland, Colchester) In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand ..... Ethel Septima Tapson

One of the witnesses to the will, in a very shaky hand, was Ethel Septima's sister *Helen O. Bayne-Jardine Widow*. Ethel Septima died, aged 84 years, on 15 January 1939; probate of her will was granted at London on 17 April 1939 to Alfred Tapson Bayne-Jardine (fruit and poultry farmer) and Sidney Ronald Hughes Smith (solicitor). The estate, initially valued at £2,439 - 7 - 10, was later resworn at £1,743 - 19 - 9.•

• See page 401 §2 for further information about Emily and Ethel Septima

The Parish Church of St. Germans

It is said that St. Germans was named after the missionary St. Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre, who founded a church there in about 430 A.D. The early Cornish bishops may have had seats at both Bodmin and St. Germans; certainly from 981 A.D. there was a succession of bishops of St. Germans until 1043, when the Cornish see of St. Germans was united with the Devonshire see of Crediton. The bishop's stool was transferred in 1050 A.D. to the newly founded see of Exeter, and the cathedral of St. Germans eventually became an Augustinian priory. The present church, on the site of the old cathedral, dates from the early Thirteenth Century, but embodies a good deal of Norman work from earlier building, including the bases of the two west towers and the fine doorway between them.

Although now not much more than a village, its ecclesiastical history indicates that in earlier times St. Germans was quite an important little town. Even as late as the Nineteenth Century the quay (page 268) was a busy place; one of the warehouses on the quay, possibly that used in their business as coal merchants by William Tapson and his son William Henry, is now the home of the Quay Sailing Club. The railway viaduct across the river Tidy carries the extension westward, to Penzance, of the Great Western Railway line beyond Brunel's Royal Albert Bridge (page 80) over the river Tamar which was opened in 1859, so that view would have been a familiar one to the later Tapsons to have lived in St. Germans.

Sarah Ann Hanns, described in the marriage entry as a servant, was probably the servant listed in the 1841 census return for Lamerton (PRO HO107/232/3 Fo. 8):

Ven

Thomas Robins	*55-59*	*Solicitor*	*Not born in Devonshire*
Sarah Tapson	*20-24*	*Servant*	*Born in Devonshire*

Venn, to the south of Lamerton village, is just two miles out of Tavistock town along the Launceston road. The servant girl in the Venn household would not have been Sally, a daughter of John Tapson of Lamerton, since Sally was already married (Page 357).

Joseph and Sarah Bates and their children are included in the 1851 census return for Tavistock (PRO HO107/1883 Fo. 471):

Taylors Square

Joseph Bate	*Head*	*Mar*	*27*	*Carpenter*	*Devon,*	*Lamerton*
Sarah Bate	*Wife*	*Mar*	*30*		*„*	*Tavistock*
Arthur Bate	*Son*		*5*		*„*	*Lamerton*
Elizabeth Bate	*Dau*		*3*		*„*	*Tavistock*
Louisa Bate	*Dau*		*2 mo.*		*„*	*„*
James Bate	*Lodger*		*45*	*Journeyman Cabinett Maker*	*„*	*Devonport*

The son was obviously named after Joseph's father. Sarah Ann Hanns, would have been 31 years old at the time of this census; her age is accurately recorded in the 1881 census return for Tavistock (PRO RG11/2217 Fo. 120):

23 Bannerwell St

Joseph Bate	*Head*	*Mar*	*57*	*Carpenter*	*Devon,*	*Lamerton*
Sarah Bate	*Wife*	*Mar*	*61*	*Dairy Woman*	*„*	*Tavistock*
Kate Bate	*Dau*	*Un*	*19*	*Assist to do*	*„*	*„*
Joseph Bate	*Son*		*15*		*„*	*„*

Thomas Robert Hanns, the son of John and Hannah, would have been 30 at the time of the 1851 census, when the return for Holborn, London (PRO HO107/1515 Fo. 248) has the entry:

140 Gt Saffron Hill

Thomas Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*28*	*Clerk to Timber Merchant*	*Tavistock*
Thomas Poney	*Lodger*	*Mar*	*33*	*Porter at Timber Yard*	*Surrey, Kennington*
Jane Poney	*Wife*	*Mar*	*32*		*Bath*

No marriage had been registered for Thomas, who then seems to have disappeared without trace.•

The following marriage was solemnized in the church of St. Paul, Islington:

21 Apr 1844	***George Tapson***	*Full*	*Bachelor*	*Carpenter*	*Brunswick Place*
				(Father: John Tapson, Farmer)	
	Sarah Lawrence	*20*	*Spinster*		*Brunswick Place*
				(Father: John Lawrence, Carpenter)	

by Banns in the presence of Edwin Sumner & Elizabeth Pattison

The birth of a daughter, *Anna Caroline*, was registered in 1844, Q3 (Islington R.D.), and the family appear in the 1851 census return for Marylebone (PRO HO107/1490 Fo. 9):

3 Chapel St

George Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*28*	*Carpenter*	*Devonsh, Exeter*
Sarah Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*28*		*Middx, Holloway*
Hannah Tapson	*Dau*		*6*		*„* *„*
Katherine Swann			*28*	*Dress Maker*	*Kent, Cantby*

It seems likely that this George was Francis George Hanns, in his 28th year at the time of the census, who named his daughter after his mother, but it is surprising that he should have given his place of birth as Exeter, some thirty miles from Tavistock. In 1851 Thomas Robert Hanns was living less than three miles from George, at Holborn, so the brothers may have moved to London together.

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

George was about 33 years old when his death was registered (Islington R.D.) in 1857, Q1. George's widow and daughter were in Islington for the 1861 census (PRO RG9/151 Fo. 15):

10 Belle Vue Terrace

Sarah Tapson	*Head*	*Widow*	*37*	*Dress Maker*	*Middlesex, Shadwell*
Anne C. Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*16*	*Artificer at Florists*	*„ „*

It is not clear why their birthplace should have been given as Shadwell, unless it was an enumerator's error.

Hannah Caroline was married later that year in the Islington Parish Church of St. Mary:

17 Dec 1861	***John Hutton Paull***	*Full*	*Bachelor*	*Clerk*
	29 Clarence Terrace		*(Father: John Hutton Paull, Banker)*	
	Hannah Carroline Tapson	*Minor*	*Spinster*	
	18 Belle Vue Terrace		*(Father: George Tapson, Carpenter)*	

by Banns in the presence of .....(?), Thos Bilby

Sarah was included in the 1881 census return (PRO RG11/665 Fo. 67) for Streatham, Surrey :

2 Spencer Villas, Rossiter Rd.

George Standish Haley	*Head*	*Mar*	*27*	*Tea Brokers Market Clerk*	*Cape Colony, British Subject*
Elizabeth Madaline Haley	*Wife*	*Mar*	*24*		*Somersetsh, Chard*
Madaline Mary Haley	*Dau*		*4*		*Middx, Hampstead*
Sarah Tapson	*Nurse*	*Widow*	*57*	*Monthly Nurse*	*„ Holloway*
Ellen Josephine McCarthy	*Serv*	*Un*	*21*	*General Servant*	*Surrey, Mitcham*

Sarah's death was registered (Wandsworth R.D.) in 1909, Q1, her age being given as 84, which is consistent with the age recorded for her in the 1881 census return.•

The Quay and Railway Viaduct, St. Germans

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

John Charles's wife and baby daughter were recorded in the census at their home in Stoke Damerel (PRO RG11/2206 Fo. 88):

29 Chapel

Mary Ann Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*21*	*Cornwall, Bodmin*
Elizabeth Ann Tapson	*Dau*		*16 mo.*	*Devon, Devonport*

A son, John Charles, was born on 27 July 1882 at Stoke Damerel.

According to his *Certificate of Service* (page 280), John Charles re-enlisted on 12 August 1882; and the *Register of Seamen's Services* (page 280) records that on 22 September 1882 he was transferred to H. M. Coastguard. He was posted to County Donegal, in the north of Ireland, probably to Trebane on Donegal Bay, though the name in the Register (page 280) is not very legible. Here three more children were born: Jane Coram (born about 1883 and named after John Charles's aunt who had died a few years earlier), William Henry and Ernest Edward. According to their birth certificates,* both issued in the district of Dunkineely on Donegal Bay, William Henry was born on 23 August 1885 at Ballybodonell and Ernest Edward on 19 May 1889 at Rahanfar. During this posting John Charles was promoted to Commissioned Boatman; his final posting was to Buncrana on Loch Swilly (page 280).

The family then returned to Plymouth, where Jane Coram died; she was buried at Ford Park Cemetery:

29 Nov 1900 Jane Coram Tapson 3 Wesley Terrace, Plymouth (Charles) 17

The address given in this burial entry, also entered on John Charles's *Certificate of Service* as the address of his next of kin, confirms that Jane Coram was one of his children. Two more children were born at Plymouth, Ellen Amelia on 5 March 1893 and Elsie Hilda May on 15 October 1903. Although John Charles was by this time a pensioner, his *Certificate of Service* makes it clear that he nevertheless had to report to the Stonehouse Battery for two weeks of *drill* each year; and from 12 June 1901 until 1 May 1905, when the Shore Fleet Reserve was abolished, he undertook another period of continuous service.•

Two weddings are recorded in the register of the church of St. Pancras, Pennycross:

14 Feb 1906 ***Edwin James Jewell*** *27 Bachelor Hairdresser*
3 Wesley Terrace (Father: William Henry Jewell, Cab proprietor)
Elizabeth Ann Tapson *26 Spinster*
3 Wesley Terrace (Father: John Charles Tapson, Pensioner)
by Banns in the presence of John C. Tapson Junr & John C. Tapson

17 Aug 1912 ***William Henry Tapson*** *26 Bachelor Clerk*
18 Wesley Terrace, Peverell (Father: John Charles Tapson, Pensioner R.N.)
Elsie Mary Snell *24 Spinster*
34 Elim Terrace, Peverell (Father: Mark Snell, Rivetter H.M. Dockyard)
by Banns in the presence of Mark Snell & Elizabeth Ann Jewell

John Charles died on 18 January 1913; he was buried at Ford Park Cemetery:

25 Jan 1913 John Tapson 18 Wesley Terrace, Plymouth (Plym. N.) 59

His remaining children all married: Ernest Edward married Mahala Deborah Nash in 1914, Q3; Ellen Amelia married Rodney W. Penney in 1916, Q2; John Charles Junior married Hilda A. Rogers in 1921, Q1; and Elsie Hilda May married William Nicholas Maddaford in 1925, Q2.

John Charles's widow, Mary Ann, then living at 3 Kensington Terrace, Plymouth, wrote her will on 3 April 1944. In it she made bequests to her children, Elsie Hilda May Maddaford, John Charles Tapson, William Henry Tapson, Ernest *Edwin* Tapson, Elizabeth Ann Jewell and Ellen Amelia Penney, as well as to her son-in-law William Nicholas Maddaford. Mary Ann's death certificate* states that she died at 3 Kensington Terrace on 23 February 1953 at the age of 93 years; she was buried at Ford Park Cemetery.

*In the possession of John Charles's grandson Anthony Charles Tapson.

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

View of Dartmoor from Hay Tor

Hay Tor, a great outcrop of granite, lies on the eastern side of Dartmoor above Ilsington; at 1,491 feet above sea level it is only the eleventh highest peak of the moor, but it is crowned by one of the finest masses of exposed granite. The three highest points of Dartmoor are High Willhayes at 2,039 feet, Yes Tor at 2,028 feet, each about four miles to the east of Bridestowe village, and Steng-a-Tor at 1,900 feet, just over three miles to the east of Bridestowe village. Both Buckland Monachorum and Bridestowe lie close to the edge of the moor, which covers an area of about 100,000 acres and is roughly 28 miles from north to south and 26 miles from east to west. Their proximity to Dartmoor must have had quite an influence on the lives of the early Tapsons, not least on account of the micro-climate in the vicinity of the moor. Rainfall is high, and the peaks are often shrouded in a mist which not infrequently sweeps down across the surrounding countryside; in such conditions the moor is a forbiddingly bleak and hostile place, not least because of its many treacherous peat bogs. However, in favourable weather the Dartmoor scenery is very grand, as illustrated in the photograph; particularly picturesque are the deep, wooded valleys and ravines at the fringes of the moor which have been carved out by the many rivers born in its central bogs, such as at Double Waters in Buckland Monachorum parish (page 111).

Dartmoor is a great mass of granite, a rock in which tin is found. Anciently on Dartmoor much stream tin was found — superficial deposits left behind after granite had crumbled and had been carried away by water; but after these deposits were exhausted tin had to be mined from lodes running through the granite. The involvement of Tapsons in the tin industry during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries has been detailed in §4.7. The valley of the Tamar, which runs south immediately to the west of Dartmoor, was rich in silver-lead, arsenic, copper and manganese. Several members of the Tapson family were engaged in the mining of tin, copper and manganese during the Nineteenth Century (§5.6, §9.11, §9.12, §9.14, §9.22, §10.12), but soon thereafter mining in the area ceased to be economic and was discontinued.

Photograph by Ursula Tapson.

A *Stratton Feoffees' Stock Book* (CRO P216/25/323) gives details of cash paid in by Ebsworthy Tapson in May 1838 and in December 1842. A *Rent Book 1820-1857* (CRO P216/25/327) also shows rent being paid up to 1857 *in the name of Ebsworthy Tapson*. After that no further mention has yet been found anywhere of Ebsworthy, although the 1841 census return for Holsworthy (PRO HO107/257/11 Fo. 14) includes a household in Bodmin Street comprising Betsey Brock, aged 25, and her three baby daughters; Mary Bennett, 20, a female servant; John Weeks, 25, a carpenter; and

Ann Tapson *45* *Born in Devonshire*

At the time of the census Ebsworthy (if he was still alive) would have been 38 years old; this Ann, about 7 years older than Ebsworthy, was probably his wife (or widow).

If Ebsworthy was already dead by 1841, then the cash and rent might still have been paid in his name out of his estate; however, there is no burial entry for him in either the Holsworthy or the Stratton parish registers. (Bude was formed into an ecclesiastical parish in 1836, being carved out of the parish of Stratton, but burials did not take place there until 1848.) Nor was his death registered anywhere in England or Wales after 1 July 1837, when civil registration was introduced. Moreover, Ann was not included in Devonshire or Cornwall at the time of the 1851 census; nor is there a burial or marriage entry for her in the Holsworthy parish register between 1841 and 1851. So it is possible that Ebsworthy had emigrated and that Ann joined him sometime after the 1841 census.•

The block of four three-storey houses constructed by Ebsworthy is situated in the Strand at Bude, to the right of the Globe Hotel as you face it; unfortunately, single-storey shops now project from the front of the block. The houses were known as *Tapson's Terrace* until well into the Twentieth Century; today the old nameplate of the terrace may be seen in the little museum at Bude.

Okehampton Church against the Backdrop of Dartmoor

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

8.16 JOHN TAPSON OF SOUTH TAWTON, CARPENTER (B#70)

The eldest son of George Tapson B#47 was 22 when he married at South Tawton:

20 Dec 1814 ***John Tapson*** *of this Parish, Carpenter &*
Mary Ann Curson *of this Parish, Spinster*
by Banns in the presence of Francis Curson & James Crocker

The children of John and Mary Ann were baptized at South Tawton:

11 Jun 1815	*Dorcas*	*dau of John & Mary Ann Tapson,*	*South Zeal,*	*Carpenter*
14 Dec 1817	*William*	*son of John & Mary Ann Tapson,*	*South Zeal,*	*Carpenter*
7 Jan 1821	*George*	*son of John & Mary Tapson,*	*South Zeal,*	*Carpenter*
25 Dec 1823	*Tryphena*	*dau of John & Mary Ann Tapson,*	*Zele,*	*Carpenter*
28 Jan 1827	*John*	*son of John & Marianne Tapson,*	*Zeal,*	*Carpenter*
20 Jun 1830	*Thomas Curson*	*son of John & Maryann Tapson,*	*Zeale,*	*Carpenter*
13 Apr 1836	*Ann Stanbury Curson*	*dau of John & Marianne Tapson,*	*Zeal,*	*Carpenter*

South Zeal is about five miles to the east of Okehampton, in the parish of South Tawton; but whereas the village of South Tawton has remained small, its close neighbour, South Zeal, has grown into quite a sizable village, probably because of its proximity to the old A30 which was, before the construction of the new A30 trunk road, the main highway between Okehampton and Exeter. It was in South Tawton church that the eldest daughter of John and Mary Ann was married:

31 Dec 1834 ***John Endacott*** *of the Parish of Chagford &* ***Dorcas Tapson*** *of this Parish*
by Banns in the presence of Thomas Curson & Susanna Jane(?) Perkins

As well as Dorcas, William and George had also left home at the time of the 1841 census for South Tawton (PRO HO107/265/3 Fo. 16):

South Zeal Village

John Tapson	*50-54*	*Carpenter*	*Born in Devonshire*
Mary Tapson	*45-49*		*Born in Devonshire*
Trephana Tapson	*17*		*Born in Devonshire*
John Tapson	*15*		*Born in Devonshire*
Thomas Tapson	*11*		*Born in Devonshire*
Elizabeth Tapson	*13*		*Born in Devonshire*
Ann Tapson	*5*		*Born in Devonshire*
Mary Endacott	*3*		*Born in Devonshire*

If Elizabeth was another daughter of John and Mary Ann, there is no baptismal entry for her in the South Tawton parish register. Mary Endacott was clearly Dorcas's daughter. Mary Ann's father, a miller, and her brother, a butcher, were both named Francis Curson; they are included, at *Zeal Mills*, on Folio 13 of the same census return.

Between the 1841 census and the 1851 census two burials took place at South Tawton:

24 Jun 1843	*Mary Ann Tapson*	*Zeal*	*48*	
9 Sep 1848	*John Tapson*	*South Zeal*	*21*	

The 1851 census return for South Tawton (PRO HO107/1885 Fo. 444) shows only two of John's children at home, but includes another child of Dorcas:

South Zeal

John Tapson	*Head*	*Widr*	*59*	*Carpenter*	*Devon, Bridestowe*
George Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*30*	*Classical Instructor*	*„ South Tawton*
Ann Tapson	*Dau*		*14*	*Scholar*	*„ „ „*
John Endacott	*Grandson*		*13*	*Scholar*	*„ ?*
Elizabeth Mason	*Visitor*	*Un*	*21*	*Assistant*	*„ South Tawton*

John's age and place of birth confirm that he was B#70, who would have been just 59. Tryphena is shown on the same page of the census return in the house next door, that of her mother's brother:

South Zeal

Francis Curson	*Head*	*Un*	*49*	*Butcher*	*Devon, South Tawton*
Tryphena Tapson	*Niece*		*25*	*Dressmaker*	*„ „ „*

9.14 EBSWORTHY TAPSON, MINER

Ebsworthy, the youngest son of Ebsworthy and Mary of Lewtrenchard, married Catherine Jackson in 1850, Q3 (Tavistock R.D.). They were living at Rushford, a hamlet immediately south of Lamerton village, when their first two children were baptized at Lamerton parish church:

31 Dec 1851 Selina — *dau of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson, Rusford, Miner*
4 Mar 1853 Mary — *dau of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson, Rushford, Miner*

Their next four children were baptized at Calstock parish church:

3 Feb 1856 Ellen Louisa — *dau of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson, Calstock, Miner*
3 Feb 1856 Julia Ann Jackson — *dau of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson, Calstock, Miner*
28 Mar 1858 William — *son of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson, St. Ann's Chapel Miner (born 7 March 1858)*
7 Aug 1859 Ebsworthy — *son of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson, St. Anne's Chapel Miner (born 11 July 1859)*

Ellen Louisa was nearly 2 years old when she was baptized; her birth had been registered in 1854, Q2. Their home, St. Ann's Chapel, is where Ebsworthy's eldest brother, James Mason, was living in 1861 (page319). However, by 1861 Ebsworthy was back in Lamerton where another daughter was baptized:

24 Mar 1861 Pamela — *dau of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson, Hay Cottage Lamerton, Miner*

Ebsworthy was still at Hay Cottage for the 1861 census (PRO RG9/1463 Fo. 23):

Hay Cottage					
Ebsworthy Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*30*	*Copper Miner*	*Devon, Lewtrenchard*
Catherine Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*30*		*„ Mary Tavy*
Selena Tapson	*Dau*		*9*		*„ Lamerton*
Mary Tapson	*Dau*		*8*		*„ „*
Ellen L. Tapson	*Dau*		*6*		*Cornwall, Calstock*
Julia Ann J. Tapson	*Dau*		*5*		*„ „*
William Tapson	*Son*		*3*		*„ „*
Ebsworthy Tapson	*Son*		*1*		*„ „*
Pamela Tapson	*Dau*		*1 mo.*		*Devon, Lamerton*

The family soon moved again, for the next daughter was baptized at Milton Abbot:

22 Feb 1863 Kezia — *dau of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson, Milton Abbot, Miner*

The Milton Abbot parish register also records a burial:

4 Aug 1864 William Tapson — *(?)Frogner* — *6*

Two years later they were again back in Lamerton, at Collacombe Down just over a mile to the west of Lamerton village, where another daughter was baptized:

9 Jul 1865 Karen Lappuch — *dau of Ebsworthy & Catherine Tapson, Cullacombe Down Miner*

Soon, however, the family were to make an even greater decision, for the next time we hear of them they were in County Durham. Here Pamela's death at the age of 6 was registered in 1867, Q1 (Durham R.D.), and then the births of two more children were registered (Durham R.D.): John James in 1867, Q3, and Elizabeth Ann in 1869, Q2.

Mary was 17 years old when she was married in 1870, Q3 (Durham R.D.). But by this time Ebsworthy and Catherine, with the younger members of their family, had already moved once more, to Stockton-on-Tees in the south of County Durham, where the death of their son Ebsworthy had been registered (Stockton R.D.) in 1870, Q2; his age was correctly given as 10 years.• The following year Elizabeth Ann's death was registered there, in 1871, Q4; her age was accurately recorded as 2 years. Two happier events then followed: Selina's marriage was registered in 1873, Q4 (West Bromwich R.D.) and Ellen Louisa's in 1876, Q2 (Durham R.D.). It seems likely that Ellen Louisa and her elder sister Mary, who had been married in Durham R.D. six years before, had not gone to Stockton-on-Tees with the rest of the family.

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

West Bromwich R.D., where Selina's marriage was registered, is north-west of Birmingham, and it is likely that Ebsworthy and Catherine had already moved to that area with the younger members of their family before Selina's marriage there. They were included in the 1881 census (PRO RG11/2841 Fo. 54) for Oldbury, Worcestershire, which is in the West Bromwich R.D.:

Pit Land					
Ebsworthy Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*50*	*Sampler of Copper*	*Devon, Lewtrenchard*
Catherine Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*50*		*„ Maratavy*
Kezia Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*18*		*„ Milton Abott*
Karen Tapson	*Dau*	*Un*	*15*	*Pupil Teacher*	*„ Lamerton*
John J. Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*13*	*Scholar*	*Durham, Landchester*

The birthplace given for John James suggests that when the family left Devon they first made their home in Lanchester, about 8 miles north-west of Durham city.

Kezia's marriage was registered in 1884, Q2 (West Bromwich R.D.). Although four of her sisters had married by the time they were 22, Karen Lappuch did not marry until she was 50 years old; her marriage was registered in 1915, Q3 (West Bromwich R.D.). Neither a marriage nor the death of Julia Ann Jackson seems to have been registered in England or Wales; she may have emigrated. Ebsworthy and Catherine made at least one further move, for their deaths were registered in Kings Norton R.D., to the south of Birmingham. Ebsworthy died in 1901, Q1; he would have been in his 71st year, the age given on his death certificate.• Catherine's death was registered in 1905, Q1; her age was given as 76, though she would have been only 74 years old if the ages given for her in the census returns were correct.

Distant View of Bodmin Moor from Stowford Churchyard

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

William and Sarah were at a new address by the time of the 1851 census for Chelsea (PRO HO107/1473 Fo. 419), when George Joseph was the last of their children still living at home; he would have been nearly 20 years old if his correct date of birth was entered in the baptismal register:

17 Little College Street

William Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*68*	*Carpenter*	*Cornwall, South Petherwin*
Sarah Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*58*		*Somersetsh., Bridgewater*
George Tapson	*Son*	*Un*	*20*	*Carpenter*	*Middlesex, Chelsea*

It would seem to have been William's daughter Susan shown, living alone, on Folio 524 of the same census return, though she should have given her age as 26:

2b Little Kepple St.

Susan Tapson	*Head*	*Un*	*28*	*Ironer*	*Middlesex, Chelsea*

She was probably the Susan Tapson whose death was registered (St. George, Hanover Square, R.D.) in 1855, Q1. Ann Caroline was 33 years old when she married in 1852, Q4 (Chelsea R.D.).

William was probably the *William Gregory Tapson* whose death was registered in 1860, Q3 (Chelsea R.D.), but the death certificate needs to be checked; William would have been 74. The 1861 census for Chelsea (PRO RG9/35 Fo. 52) shows Sarah living alone at the same address:

17 Little College St.

Sarah Tapson	*Head*	*Wid*	*68*	*Laundress*	*Somerset, Bridgewater*

Sarah was still alive at the time of the 1881 census return for Chelsea (PRO RG11/84 Fo. 93):

Chelsea Workhouse, Arthur Street, Chelsea

Tapson Sarah	*Pauper*	*Wid*	*100*	*Somerset, Bridgewater*

Sarah's death was registered in 1887, Q2 (Chelsea R.D.); she would have been about 94 years old if her age was given correctly in the census returns, though it is recorded in the index of deaths as 107!

Bridestowe Church

10.5 EDMUND GREGORY TAPSON OF CHELSEA, GENERAL DEALER

Edmund Gregory Tapson, the eldest surviving son of William and Sarah, was 30 years old at the time of his marriage in 1847, Q1 (Kensington R.D.). The wedding was followed by two baptisms in the church of St. Luke, Chelsea (GLRO):

6 Sep 1848 Elizabeth Ann dau of Edmund & Elizabeth Ann Tapson, ... St
Labourer (born 26 May 1848)
23 Dec 1849 Edmund William John son of Edmund & Elizabeth Tapson, Oakham St
Labourer (born 12 Nov 1849)

The family is found in the 1851 census return for Chelsea (PRO HO107/1473 Fo. 478):

3 Oakham Street

Edmund Tapson	*Head*	*Mar*	*32*	*Labourer*	*Somersetsh, Glasinbury*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Wife*	*Mar*	*21*		*Middlesex, Chelsea*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Dau*		*3*		*„ „*
Edmund Tapson	*Son*		*1*		*„ „*

Edmund Gregory should have given his age as 34.

The birth of another son, Robert James, was registered in 1852, Q2 (Chelsea R.D.), and two more baptisms followed in the church of St. Luke, Chelsea:

10 Jun 1855 Mary Ann dau of Edmund & Elizabeth Tapson, Oakham Street
Labourer (born 22 May 1855)
18 Jan 1857 William Charles son of Edmund & Elizabeth Tapson, Oakham Street
Labourer (born 26 Dec 1856)

The deaths were registered (Chelsea R.D.) of Mary Ann in 1856, Q1, of *William*, probably William Charles (page 347), in 1860, Q2, and then of Elizabeth, Edmund Gregory's wife, in 1860, Q4, aged about 30. Also in 1860, Q4, were registered (Chelsea R.D.) the birth and the death of George Tapson; his birth certificate would be needed to determine whether he was another child of Edmund Gregory, but it seems likely that he was and that his mother died during or soon after his birth.

The 1861 census return for Chelsea (PRO RG9/35 Fo. 107) lists only three surviving children, which adds weight to the supposition that it was William Charles who died in 1860, Q2:

Oakham St.

Edmund Tapson	*Head*	*Widr*	*42*	*General Dealer*	*Somersetshire, Glastonbury*
Elizabeth Tapson	*Dau*		*13*		*Middlesex, Chelsea*
Edmund Tapson	*Son*		*9*		*„ „*
Robert Tapson	*Son*		*7*		*„ „*

Elizabeth's age should have been recorded as 12, Edmund's as 11 and Robert's as 8.

By the time of the 1871 census for Chelsea (PRO RG10/86 Fo. 20), Edmund Gregory seems to have been in lodgings, but the return was rather carelessly completed:

15 Oakham Street

.....

Edd Tapson	*?*	*Widr*	*58*	*General Dealer*	*England*

Edmund Gregory's death was registered (Chelsea R.D.) in 1879, Q1; his age was correctly given as 62.

The death of Elizabeth Ann was registered (Chelsea R.D.) in 1884, Q2; her age was given as 39, but she would have been about 36 years old. And it would seem to be Robert James who appears, living in a lodging house, in the 1881 census return for the parish of St. James, Grimsby (PRO RG11/3268 Fo. 29); his birthplace is right, but he would have been only 29 years old:

23 & 21 (?)Havelock St

.....

Robt Tapson	*Lodger*	*Un*	*31*	*Labourer*	*Middlesex, St. Lukes*

Grimsby is on the Lincolnshire coast near the mouth of the Humber.•

• See Appendix VI (Addenda)

The birth of Mabel Kathleen, registered in 1892, Q3 (East Stonehouse R.D.), was soon followed by her burial at Ford Park Cemetery:

13 Aug 1892 Mabel Kathleen Tapson 19 Emma Place, Stonehouse 6 weeks

The birth of another daughter, Dorothy Christine, was registered (East Stonehouse R.D.) in 1896, Q2.•

The Will of Christopher Samuel Tapson dated 27 February 1929

This is the Last Will and Testament of me Christopher Samuel Tapson of 17, Dragon Avenue, Harrogate in the County of York Commercial Traveller

1. I Hereby Revoke all testamentary dispositions heretofore made by me.

2. I Appoint my wife Emily Ann Tapson and my daughter Dorothy Christine Tapson ..... to be the Executrices and trustees of this my Will

3. I Devise and Bequeath all my real and personal estate and effects unto my Trustees Upon Trust to sell call in and convert the same into money..... and after payment thereout of my debts and funeral and testamentary expenses to invest the residue of such moneys in their names ..... and to stand possessed of such investments ..... Upon Trust:—

(a) To pay the income thereof to my wife for her life and after her death

(b) As to both capital and income for my said daughter absolutely.

In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand this twenty seventh day of February One Thousand Nine Hundred and Twenty Nine. *Christopher Samuel Tapson*

Christopher Samuel's death was registered in 1934, Q4 (Knaresborough R.D.); his age was given correctly as 69. His will was proved on 5 February 1935; the grant of probate states that he died on 18 December 1934, and values his estate at £1,278 - 14 - 10. The death of Emily Ann, Christopher Samuel's widow, was registered in 1941, Q1 (Knaresborough R.D.); her age was given as 72. Dorothy Christine, who did not marry, died at the age of 54 in 1950, Q2 (Gosport R.D.).

Cornwall and the Mouth of the Lynher River across the Tamar Estuary from Plymouth

•See Appendix VI (Addenda)

10.20 ROBERT TAPSON OF SHOREDITCH, LABOURER

The register of St. Leonard, Shoreditch (GL) records the baptisms:

4 Aug 1823 Alice dau of Robert & Jane Tapson, Labourer of Sanders Gardens (born 7 July 1823)

21 Jun 1825 Robert son of Robert & Jane Tapson, Green Grocer of Saunders Gardens (born 24 May 1825)

21 Jan 1828 Sarah dau of Robert & Jane Tapson, Labourer of Mail Coach Yard (born 20 December 1827)

27 Dec 1830 John son of Robert & Jane Tapson, Coster Monger of Mail Coach Yard (born 9 November 1830)

20 Jul 1835 Eliza Harriet dau of Robert & Margaret Tapson, Labourer of Kingsland Road (born 23 June 1835)

17 Jul 1837 Margaret dau of Robert & Margaret Tapson, Labourer of White Bear Gardens (five weeks)

It is not certain whether the same Robert was the father of all these children; so far no evidence of Jane's death or of Robert's marriage to Margaret has been found. However, according to Robert's age given in the 1851 census return (PRO HO107/1534 Fo. 43) for the parish of St. Leonard, Shoreditch, he would have been about 37 years old at the time of Alice's birth and about 51 years old when Margaret was born, so he could well have fathered all of them:

2 Leg of Mutton Yard

Robert Tapson	*Head*	*Widr*	*65*	*General Dealer*	*Middlesex, Shoreditch*
Margaret Tapson	*Dau*		*13*	*"*	*"*

The death of Robert's wife Margaret was not registered after civil registration of births, deaths and marriages was introduced on 1 July 1837, so it seems likely that she died in the June of that year during, or shortly after, childbirth. As for Robert himself, it may be that he was the Robert baptized at the church of St. John, Hackney, the next parish to Shoreditch (GLRO):

9 Mar 1788 Robert son of James and Rachael Tapson

If so, he would have been 63 years old at the time of the 1851 census, assuming that he was baptized soon after his birth. No other evidence has come to light of James and Rachael.

The daughters of Robert and Margaret were married at the church of St. Dunstan, Stepney (GLRO):

4 Jun 1854 ***Charles Wire*** *20* *Bachelor* *Laborer*
18 North Street *(Father: William Wire, Wine Porter)*
Eliza Tapson *19* *Spinster*
20 North Street *(Father: Robert Tapson, Laborer)*
by Banns in the presence of William Wire & Mary Jones

12 Jun 1859 ***Wiliam Fordham*** *23* *Bachelor* *Coal Porter*
17 Garden Street *(Father: William Fordham, Laborer)*
Margaret Tapson *22* *Spinster*
1, Mulberry Court *(Father: Robert Tapson, Laborer)*
by Banns in the presence of Mary Ann Jones & William Fordham

Eliza was nearly 19 when she married, and Margaret married very close to her 22nd birthday.

THE ANCIENT PARISHES AND HUNDREDS OF DEVONSHIRE

BRISTOL CHANNEL

ATLANTIC OCEAN

SOMERSET

Now in Somerset

Now in Dorset

DORSET

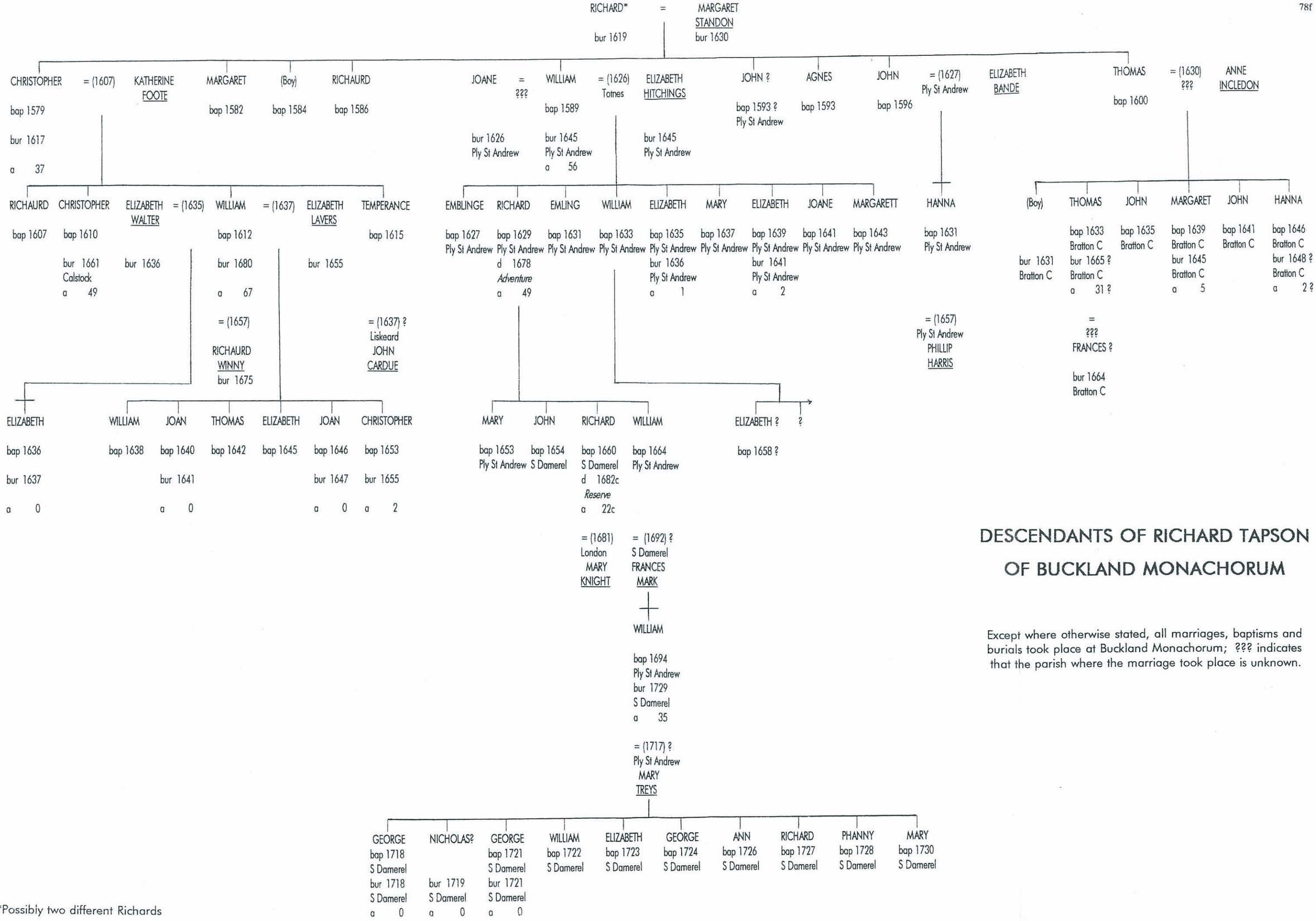
CORNWALL

ENGLISH CHANNEL

0 Miles 10

KEY TO THE HUNDREDS

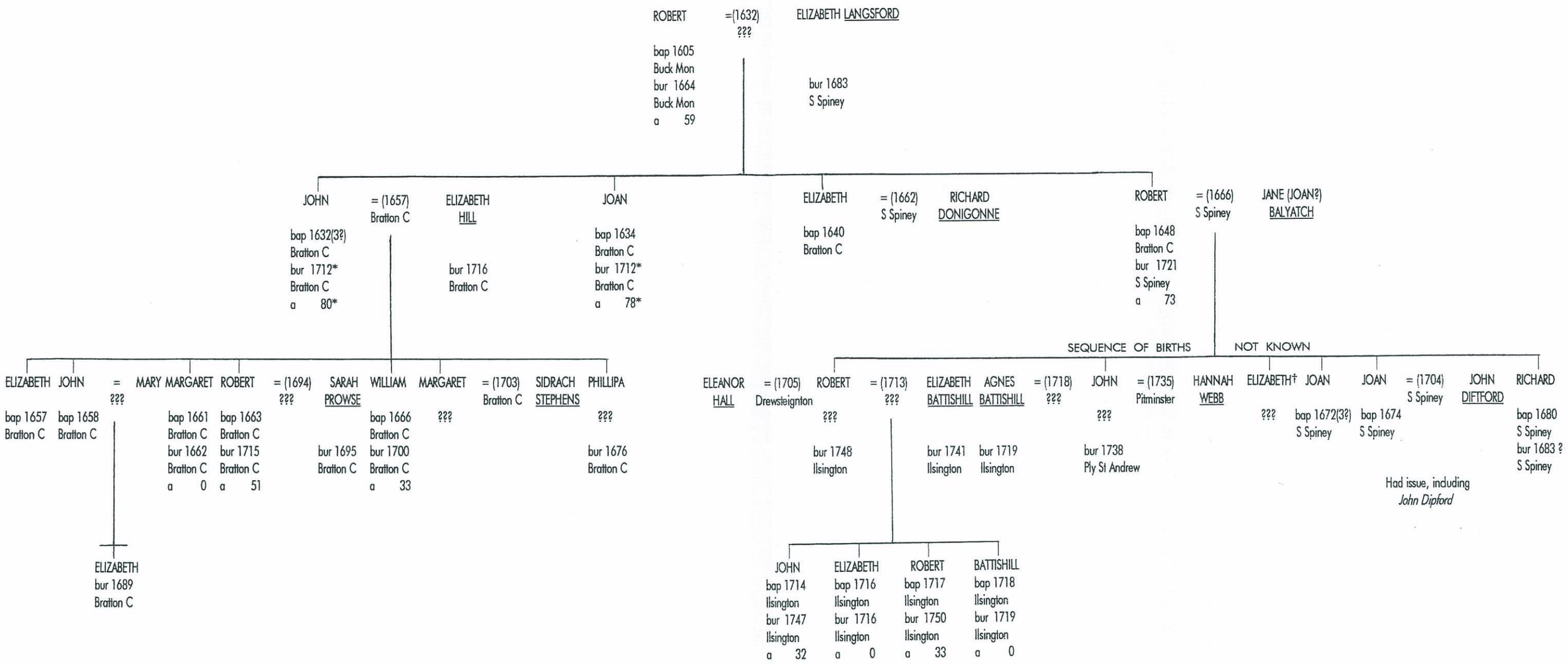
1	Roborough	17	Halberton
2	Tavistock	18	Bampton
3	Lifton	19	Hemyock
4	Black Torrington	20	Axminster
5	Shebbear	21	Colyton
6	Fremington	22	East Budleigh
7	Hartland	23	Ottery St Mary
8	Shirwell	24	Cliston
9	Braunton	25	Wonford
10	South Molton	26	Exminster
11	North Tawton	27	Teignbridge
12	Witheridge	28	Haytor
13	Crediton	29	Coleridge
14	West Budleigh	30	Stanborough
15	Hayridge	31	Ermington
16	Tiverton	32	Plympton



*Possibly two different Richards

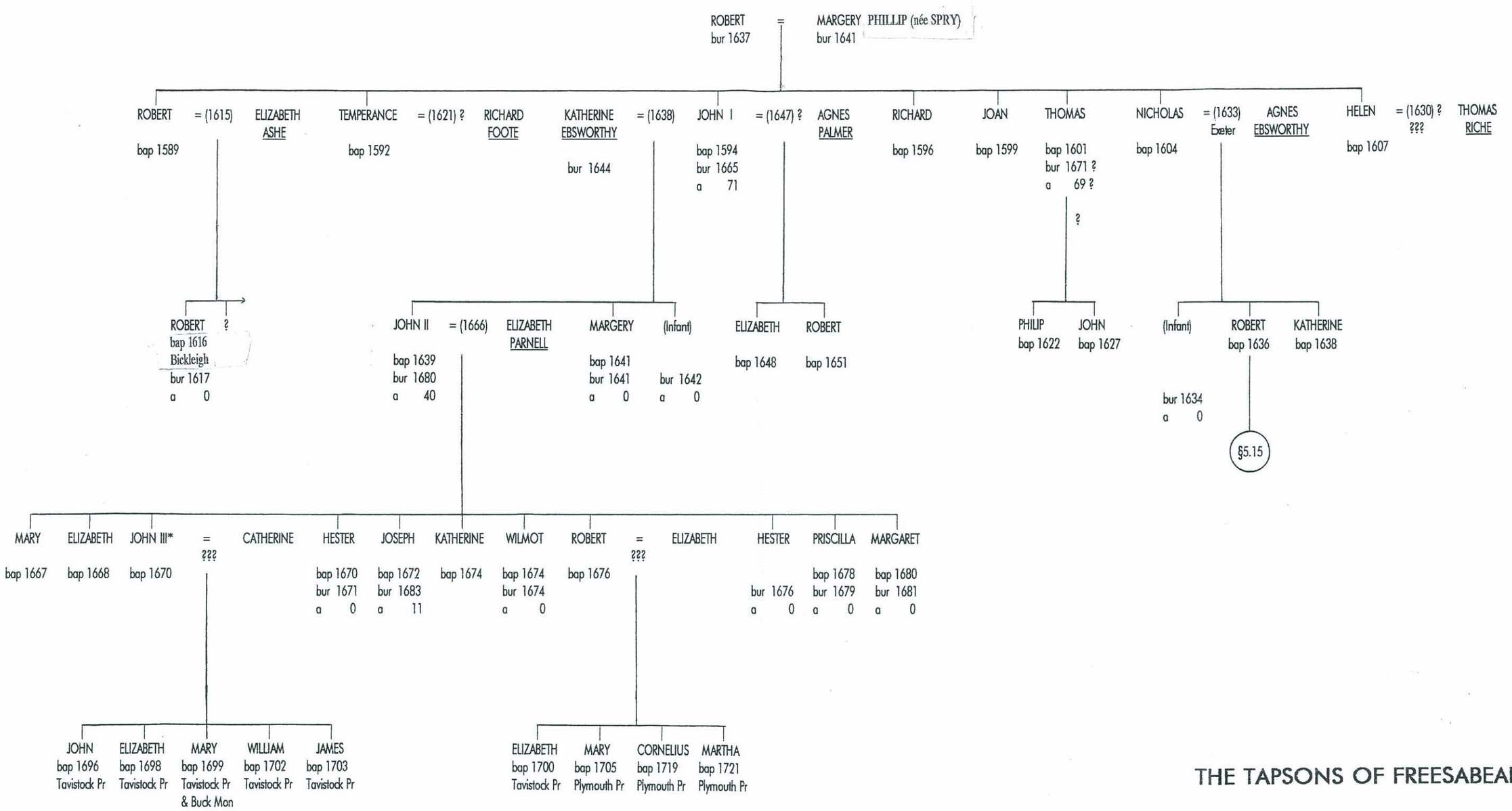
DESCENDANTS OF RICHARD TAPSON OF BUCKLAND MONACHORUM

Except where otherwise stated, all marriages, baptisms and burials took place at Buckland Monachorum; ??? indicates that the parish where the marriage took place is unknown.



??? indicates that the parish in which the marriage or baptism took place is unknown.
*It is not certain whether the parish register entry should be read as *Joan* or as *John*.
†Elizabeth was named as aunt and heir of Robert Tapson, Clerk.

DESCENDANTS OF ROBERT TAPSON OF BRATTON CLOVELLY — VERY CONJECTURAL EXTENSION



*See also §10.10

THE TAPSONS OF FREESABEARE

Except where otherwise stated, all marriages, baptisms and burials took place at Buckland Monachorum; ??? indicates that the parish where the marriage took place is unknown.

5.2 NICHOLAS = (1703) ANN GOULD
St Thomas by Launceston
bur 1750 bur 1759

B

5.2|#6 NICHOLAS = (1727) Lydford MARGARET JAGOE
bap 1704
bur 1738
a 34
bur 1779

5.2|#7 EBSWORTHY
bap 1706
bur 1707 or 8
a 0 or 1

5.2|#8 ANN = (1731) WILLIAM COOMBE
bap 1708

5.2|#9 MARY = (1735) Exeter JOHN NEWCOMBE
bap 1711

5.3|#10 EBSWORTHY = (1737) Lydford DIONYSIA BURNAFORD
bap 1714
bur 1784
a 69
bur 1782

5.2|#11 KATHERINE
bap 1718

5.2|#12 ROBERT
bap 1721
bur 1740?
a 19?

D

E

5.2|#19 HENRY
bap 1727
bur 1784
a 56

5.8|#20 JOHN
bap 1728
bur 1805
a 76

5.7|#21 NICHOLAS = (1761) Lamerton ELIZABETH SLEMAN
bap 1730
bur 1784
bur 1784 Lamerton
a 54

5.2|#22 EBSWORTHY
bap 1733
bur 1735
a 2

|#23 ROBERT
bap 1734
?

5.7|#24 ANNE = (1755) ? Sourton ROGER BALL
bap 1737

5.3|#24a ANNE
bap 1737
Lydford
bur 1737
a 0

5.3|#25 EBSWORTHY
bap 1739
bur 1739
a 0

5.3|#26 ELIZABETH
bap 1746
bur 1746
a 0

5.3|#27 NICHOLAS
bap 1747
bur 1750
a 2

5.3|#28 NICHOLAS
bap 1750
bur 1750
a 0

5.3|#29 JOHN
bap 1753
bur 1754
a 1

|#30 MARY
bap 1755

5.4|#31 EBSWORTHY = (1778) ANN TAPSON
bap 1758
bur 1831
Ply Ebenezer
a 77

G

No known issue

H

5.8|#41 MARY
bap 1750

5.8|#42 EBSWORTHY
bap 1752

5.4|#43 ANN
bap 1754

|#43a NICHOLAS
bap 1755
Sourton

5.8|#43b DIONISIA
bap 1757
Sourton

|#43c JOHN
bap 1758
Sourton

5.13|#44 ROBERT*
bap 1760
bur 1838
St Germans
a 78

5.10|#45 WILLIAM
bap 1761
bur 1811
a 49

5.8|#46 GEORGE
bap 1765
bur 1765
a 0

5.9|#47 GEORGE
bap 1768
bur 1842
a 74

5.5|#48 NICHOLAS
bap 1779
bur 1833
a 53

5.4|#49 MARY BURNAFORD
bap 1780

|#50 EBSWORTHY
bap 1783

|#51 JOHN
bap 1785

5.4|#52 DIONYSIA
bap 1787

|#53 ANNE
bap 1788

5.4|#54 ROBERT
bap 1790
bur 1791
a 0

|#55 DIONYSIA
bap 1792

|#56 JENNY
bap 1794

§7.2

§8.1

§7.11

§8.3

§8.7

= (1773)
GEORGE
BALL

= (1778)
EBSWORTHY
TAPSON

= (1779)
WILLIAM
BALL

= (1781)
JANE
KEEN
bur 1832
a 76
*

= (1784)
Sourton
GRACE
RICE
bur 1822
a 59

= (1810)
MARY
COOMBE
bur 1883
Ply Ford Pk
a 94c

= (1800)
Okehampton
SAMUEL
GOOCH

L

K

M

N

5.13|#68 JENNY ?
bap 1785
bur 1786
a 1

5.10|#59 MARY
bap 1784

5.10|#60 GRACE
bap 1786

5.11|#61 WILLIAM
bap 1791
bur 1825
a 33

5.10|#62 ANNE
bap 1794

|#63 THOMAS RICE
bap 1796

|#64 JOHN
bap 1799

5.10|#65 ROBERT
bap 1801
bur 1801
a 0

|#66 EBSWORTHY
bap 1803

|#67 JOSEPH
bap 1806

§8.10

§8.13

§8.15

APP VI

5.9|#69 MARIA
bap 1792
bur 1817
a 25

|#70 JOHN
bap 1792

|#71 THOMAS
bap 1793

|#72 WILLIAM
bap 1795

|#72a EBSWORTHY
bap 1797
Lydford

|#72b ROBERT
bap 1799
Lydford

§8.16

§9.1

§9.9

§9.11

§9.15?

|#73 ANNE
bap 1801

|#74 JOSEPH
bap 1803

5.9|#74a MARY
bap 1806
Lydford

§9.16

5.9|#75 MARY
bap 1810

5.6|#76 EBSWORTHY
bap 1812
bur 1876
Ply Ford Pk
a 63

5.5|#77 WILLIAM
bap 1815
bur 1817
a 2

5.5|#78 JOHN
bap 1817
bur 1818
a 0

5.5|#79 ELIZABETH
bap 1819
bur 1819
a 0

|#80 SAMUEL
bap 1820

§9.20

5.5|#81 ANNE
bap 1823

|#82 JOHN
bap 1826

|#83 ROBERT
bap 1830

5.5|#84 DIONYSIA
bap 1833
bur 1834
a 1

§9.22

§9.23

= (1806) ?
THOMAS
PALMER

= (1808) ?
WILLIAM
BROCK

= (1818)
Holsworthy
ELIZABETH H
WONNACOTT
d 1888
Ontario

= (1840)
ROGER
NORTHCOTT

= (1820)
Stoke D
WILLIAM
HARRIS

= (1851)
Han Sq
THOMAS
SHARLAND

= (1831)
JACOB
GERRY

= (1837)
Exeter
MARY
VOYSEY
bur 1889
Ply Ford Pk
a 74c

= (1842)
JAMES
ROCKEY

O

Q

|#85 WILLIAM
bap 1820
d 1884
Ontario

|#86 ELIZABETH WONNACOTT
bap 1822

|#87 CAROLINE
bap 1824
= (1874)
Ontario
WILLIAM
VANDERVOORT

|#90 MARY
bap 1838
=(1867)
Paddington
JOHN
MAJOR

5.6|#90a JOHN
b 1840
Oke'ton RD
d 1887
Mile End RD
=(1879)
Stepney
SARAH ANN
COLLINS

5.6|#91 ANNE
bap 1842

= (1869)
Ply Charles

SAMUEL
DAWSON

5.6|#92 FANNY
bap 1845
bur 1850
a 5

5.6|#93 SUSAN
bap 1848
bur 1849
a 0

|#94 ELLEN JANE
bap 1850
= (1871)
Hammersmith
CHARLES
JEFFERY

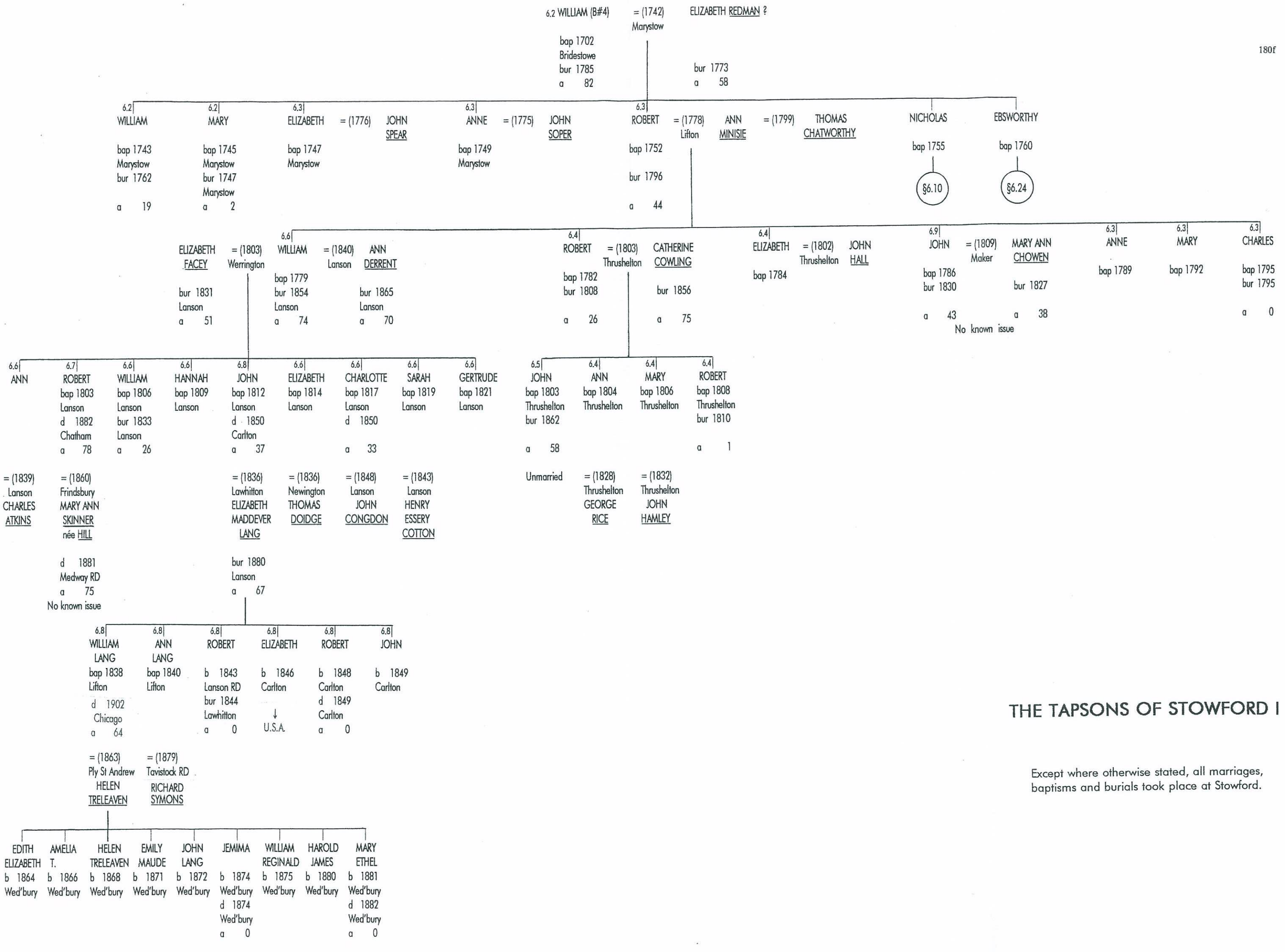
5.6|#95 SUSAN
bap 1853

=(1872)
E Stonehouse

JOHN
CROCKER

*Robert #44 married Mary Ann Pawlin at Stoke Damerel in 1835.

THE TAPSONS OF BRIDESTOWE



THE TAPSONS OF STOWFORD I

Except where otherwise stated, all marriages, baptisms and burials took place at Stowford.

6.10 NICHOLAS bap 1755 bur 1813 a 58 = (1784) MARY WALTER bap 1761 bur 1835 a 74

6.10 ELIZABETH bap 1784 = (1806) ROGER DOIDGE

6.10 ANN bap 1785 = (1826) JOHN JACKMAN

6.10 MARY bap 1787 = (1824) HUMPHRY AUTRIDGE

6.11 JOHN bap 1788 bur 1859 a 71 = (1811) MARY CROKER bur 1814 a 22

6.12 JOHN bap 1812 bur 1852 a 40 = (1840) S Damerel ELIZABETH DOIDGE bap 1812 bur 1862 a 49

6.13 NICHOLAS bap 1841 Marystow d 1913 W'wich RD a 72 = (1866) Isl'ton RD EMMA CLAY d 1918 W'worth RD a 81c

MARK b 1866 Hackney

EMMA? b 1868 W'wich RD d 1876 W'wich RD a 7

6.12 MARY bap 1843 bur 1867 S Damerel a 24

6.12 JOHN bap 1844 Broadwood d 1862 a 17

6.12 JAMES b 1846 Broadwood d 1867? B'nal Gn RD a 21

6.12 JANE DOIDGE b 1848 Broadwood ↓ U.S.A

6.12 CHARLOTTE b 1850 T'stock RD d 1885 N Abbot RD a 35

6.12 ELIZABETH bap 1852 = (1893) Tormoham WILLIAM WINGET

6.10 CHARLOTTE bap 1790

6.10 NICHOLAS bap 1792 10.11?

6.14 JENNY bap 1793 bur 1855 a 61

6.14 WILLIAM bap 1795 bur 1859 a 63 = (1819) Lanson ANN SHAPLIN bur 1845 a 56

6.14 JOHN GEORGE bap 1821 Lanson ↓ Australia ?

SUSANNA CULLIS bur 1837 Egloskerry a 44 = (1835) Laneast

6.15 ROBERT bap 1797 bur 1858 Lanson a 60 = (1840) Egloskerry CATHERINE CULLIS bur 1866 Lanson a 54

6.15 ROBERT bap 1841 Egloskerry d 1921 Bodmin a 80

6.10 CATHERINE bap 1799 = (1824) Oke'ton WILLIAM TRELIVING

6.16 EBSWORTHY bap 1802 bur 1858 Exeter a 56 = (1836) S Petherwin CATHERINE LANG bur 1866 Exeter RD a 54

6.16 MARY bap 1837 = (1875) Exeter JOHN BLACKMORE

6.17 ROBERT bap 1839 bur 1894 Wolbor'gh a 55 = (1861) Exeter ELIZABETH SOPER bur 1910 Wolbor'gh a 69

6.16 ALICE BESSIE bap 1870 Exeter d 1887 St Thomas RD a 16 (Illegitimate)

AMELIA CHARLOTTE bap 1862 Exeter = (1885) Wolbor'gh PHILLIP JAMES MAJOR

WILLIAM ROBERT bap 1865 Wolbor'gh d 1951 Yeovil a 86 = (1900) N Abbot RD ELIZABETH ANNIE A. CLEAVE d 1939 Crediton a 65

ALFRED JOHN bap 1867 Wolbor'gh bur 1867 Wolbor'gh a 0

†NICHOLAS WILLIAM b 1869 N Abbot RD bur 1869 Wolbor'gh a 0

FLORENCE EDITH bap 1870 Wolbor'gh = (1899) Wolbor'gh EDWARD CHARLES BROOKS

JESSIE MELINDA bap 1872 Wolbor'gh = (1898) Wolbor'gh EDWIN WEST

†ROSE ELLEN b 1875 N Abbot RD bur 1876 Wolbor'gh a 0

MABEL FANNY bap 1879 Wolbor'gh = (1901) St Giles RD ERNEST GEORGE SNOWDEN

ELIZABETH WHITFIELD = (1861) Exeter bur 1890 Exeter a 47

6.19 NICHOLAS bap 1840 d 1913 Northlew a 72 = * ??? JULIA MARY WEBBER d 1924 Pet'stowe a 69 No known issue

6.18 EBSWORTHY bap 1842 bur 1888 Wolbor'gh a 45 = (1867) Wolbor'gh JANE ASH bur 1887 Wolbor'gh a 47

JAMES bap 1844 S Petherwin bur 1854 Exeter a 10

CHARLOTTE bap 1846 Bideford

SARAH bap 1853 Exeter bur 1871 Exeter a 17

CATHERINE b 1857 Exeter bur 1857 Exeter a 0

JAMES b 1865 N Abbot RD d 1890? Oke'ton RD a 25

EBSWORTHY b bap 1867 Wolbor'gh bur 1867 Wolbor'gh a 0

ELLEN CHARLOTTE bap 1868 Wolbor'gh bur 1868 Wolbor'gh a 0

CATHERINE MARGARET bap 1870 Wolbor'gh bur 1873 Wolbor'gh a 2

LILY bap 1872 Wolbor'gh bur 1872 Wolbor'gh a 0

ROBERT bap 1873 Wolbor'gh bur 1903 Wolbor'gh a 30

JANE bap 1875 Wolbor'gh = (1899) Wolbor'gh GEORGE CLEAVE JOHNSON

EMANUEL GEORGE bap 1877 Wolbor'gh d 1942 Totnes RD a 65 Unmarried

SYDNEY REUBEN bap 1880 Wolbor'gh d 1915 France a 35 Unmarried

PETER FRANCIS bap 1883 Wolbor'gh d 1963 Barnstaple RD a 79 Unmarried

6.10 EMLIN bap 1804 bur 1813 a 8

6.20 CHRISTOPHER bap 1805 bur 1886 Lifton a 80 = (1835) S Damerel MARY BAILEY d 1858 ? St Olave RD

6.20 MARY b 1835c Plymouth = (1856) Woolwich WILLIAM RAYMOND

6.21 ROBERT bap 1839 Ply St And bur 1881 Lifton a 42

6.22 WILLIAM bap 1842 Woolwich d 1904 Ports'th RD a 61 = (1868) R'hithe RD JANE d 1922 Ports'th RD a 77

WILLIAM CHRISTOPHER b 1869 Plumstead = (1895) Portsea RD WINIFRED JONES

DAISY J. MARY J. b 1873 Rock Ferry = (1898) Portsea RD

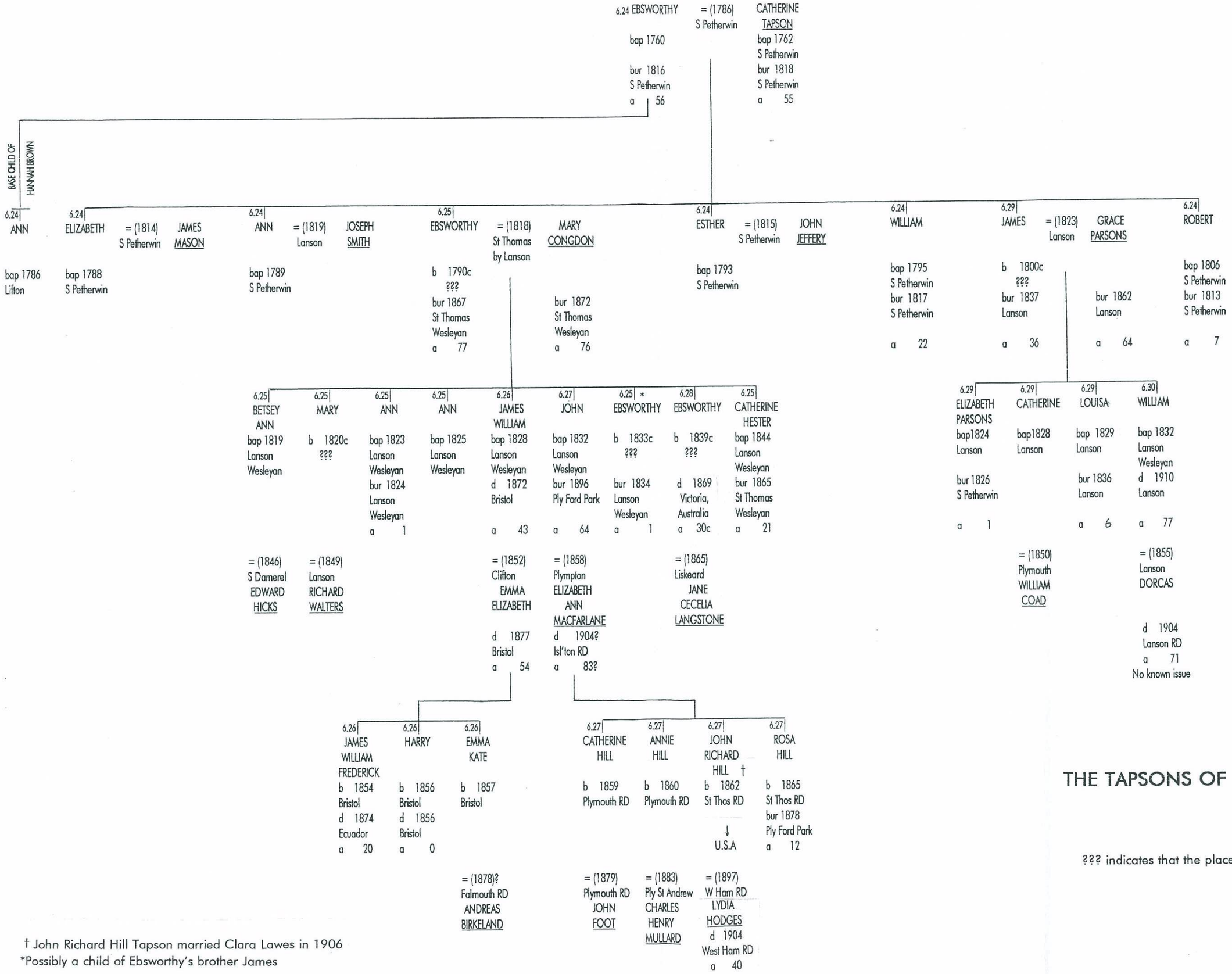
VIOLET EMMA b 1879 Brock'hurst = (1909) Ports'th RD

6.23 JOHN bap 1844 Woolwich d 1879 *Lily* a 35

*Possibly a bigamous union.
†Possibly a child of Robert's brother Ebsworthy.

THE TAPSONS OF STOWFORD II

Except where otherwise stated, all marriages, baptisms and burials took place at Stowford; ??? indicates that the parish where the marriage took place is unknown.



† John Richard Hill Tapson married Clara Lawes in 1906
*Possibly a child of Ebsworthy's brother James

THE TAPSONS OF STOWFORD III

??? indicates that the place of birth is unknown.

FRANCES BAYLEY = (1777) Shoreditch

7.2 EBSWORTHY (B #42) = (1789) Ply Charles ANN BALL

bap 1752 Bridestowe
bur 1805
a 53

d 1838
a 85

7.2 MARY ANNE = (1816) RICHARD HOCKADAY

bap 1778 Shoreditch

7.3 JOHN = (1802) St Stephens by Saltash MARIA BROAD

bap 1780 Shoreditch
bur 1848
a 68

7.5 EBSWORTHY = (1811) MARY BROCK

bap 1790
bur 1869 Ply Ford Park
a 78

bur 1859 Ply Ford Park
a 74

7.5 NANCY = (1817) GEORGE SHANNON

bap 1796

7.3 FRANCES — bap 1805 D'port Pr St

7.3 ANN FITTOCK = (1833)? Antony — d 1857 W Derby RD

7.4 EBSWORTHY JOHN = (1860) W Derby RD — bap 1814 — d 1874 Liverpool a 59

7.3 ELIZABETH SUTCLIFFE — d 1875 Liverpool a 62

7.4 HARRIET MARIA = (1839) Ply Charles JAMES THOMAS LUCKS — bap 1817

7.3 MARY JANE BROAD — bap 1822

7.3 LOUISA — b 1825c ???

7.5 EMILY — bap 1812 bur 1835 a 23

7.5 CAROLINE AUGUSTA = (1841) RICHARD DAVIES — bap 1814

7.7 EBSWORTHY = ??? — bap 1816

7.5 RACHEL DAVIES — d 1911 Newport RD a 92

7.5 ANN LOUISA ELIZABETH = (1844) — bap 1818 — d 1890 Ply Ford Park a 72

7.5 GEORGE FREDERICK WEBBER

7.7 HENRY EBENEZER — bap 1821 — d 1841 Newport RD a 20

7.6 JAMES JOHN = (1878) Hooe — bap 1825 — d 1904 Plympton RD a 79

7.5 JULIA ELIZABETH CALLAWAY — d 1895 Plympton RD a 44

7.5 CHARLES WILLIAM — bap 1827 — bur 1828 a 0

7.4 FRANCES JANE BROAD — bap 1834

7.4 HENRY JOHN — bap 1836

7.4 WILLIAM BARKER — b 1844 L'pool RD — d 1908 W Derby RD a 63

7.4 ANN — b 1847 W Derby RD

7.4 JOHN EBSWORTHY — b 1849 W Derby RD — d 1921 W Derby RD a 71

7.8 ALFRED HENRY — b 1841 Newport RD — d 1922 Clifton a 80

7.9 EBSWORTHY DAVID JAMES — b 1843 Newport RD — d 1919 Liphook a 76

7.10 * JOHN R.W. — b 1845c Newport — d 1933 Man'ter S RD a 86c

7.7 MARY ANNE EMILY — b 1847 St Mellons

7.7 CAROLINE JOSEPHINE ADA — bap 1849 Cardiff — d 1949 Cardiff a 0

7.6 JULIA MARY ANNIE — b 1879c France

7.6 EDITH EMILY — bap 1880 Hooe

= (1869) ? L'pool RD JOHN FALKNER WILLIAMS

= (1856) Cromarty JANE TAYLOR

= (1878) W Derby RD ELIZABETH BALL — d 1935 N L'pool RD a 81

= (1866) ? L'pool RD WILLIAM HUGHES

= (1870) W Derby RD ELLEN CALLAGHAN — d 1880 Liverpool RD a 30

Bigamous Union

ELIZA MORGAN — d 1891 WDerby RD a 42

= (1897) Everton ELLEN PRICE (née LEE) — d 1928 WDerby RD a 57

= (1863) Cardiff RD ELIZA JANE SCANTLEBURY — d 1922 Bristol RD a 78

= (1867) Newport RD MARTHA JORDAN — d 1944 SW Surrey RD a 96

= (1872) Walton-'-Hill CATHERINE ROBERTS — d 1898 H'head RD a 49

= (1867) Newport RD

= (1914) Han Sq RD GEORGE L. CROSSMAN

= (1915) Han Sq RD HUGH S. ANDREWES

? — b 1856

ELIZABETH — b 1879 WDerby
ROBERT WILLIAM — b 1882 WDerby
WILLIAM — b 1885 WDerby
JOHN — b 1877 WDerby
MARGARET ANNIE — b 1892 WDerby

ANNIE — b 1874 WDerby
JOHN WILLIAM HENRY — b 1876 WDerby
HENRY — b 1879 WDerby — d 1884 Liverpool a 5
ALFRED FLETCHER — b 1881 WDerby — d 1903 WDerby a 21
EMILY GEORGINA — b 1885 WDerby

MARY ANN — b 1870 Liverpool — d 1873 WDerby a 2

WILLIAM ALBERT — b 1898 Everton
ROBERT PURVIS — b 1900 Everton

EDWARD SUTTON RONSCHILD — b 1863 Newport
ANNIE MAUD — b 1865 Newport — d 1923 S Africa a 58 Unmarried
BEATRICE MARY — b 1867 Newport — d 1873 Newport a 6
ALFRED HENRY — b 1868 Newport — d 1869c ??? a 1c
ALFRED STAPLES — b 1870 Newport — d 1897 S Africa a 26 Unmarried
ALEXANDER MALCOLM — b 1872 Newport — d 1911 Cardiff a 39
EBSWORTHY JAMES — b 1874 Newport — d 1967 Bristol a 92
JAMES OCTAVIUS — b 1875 Newport — d S Africa Unmarried
WINIFRED MABEL — b 1878 Newport
BLANCHE MURIEL — b 1879 Newport — d 1935 Hastings a 56 Unmarried
LOUIE MILDRED — b 1891 Newport

CONSTANCE MARY — b 1867 Bassaleg — d 1917 Cardiff a 49 Unmarried
GERTRUDE MARION — b 1869 Tredegar
ETHEL MADELEINE — b 1873 Tredegar — d 1947 SWSurreyRD a 74 Unmarried
DORA MAY — b 1876 Tredegar — d 1948 SWSurreyRD a 71 Ummarried
CHARLES EBSWORTHY — b 1879 Penarth — d 1953 Canada a 73

ROBERT — b 1874 Holyhead
RACHEL — b 1876c Holyhead
CATHERINE MAUD — b 1878 Holyhead
MARY ANNIE EMILY — b 1881 Holyhead
GLADDIES MARION — b 1884 Holyhead

* John R. W. Tapson remarried in 1898 (Barton I RD).

Except where otherwise stated, all marriages, baptisms and burials took place at Stoke Damerel; ??? indicates that the place of birth or death is unknown.

DESCENDANTS OF EBSWORTHY TAPSON OF STOKE DAMEREL (B#42)

7.11 JOHN (B#43C) = (1782) Rame GRACE MARTIN
bap 1758 Sourton
bur 1792 a 34
bur 1833 a 77

7.12 JAMES MARTIN bap 1783 S Climsland d 1826c London a 42c Unmarried

ANN KELLY = (1810) Callington

7.13 JOHN bap 1786 bur 1853 a 67 = ? ??? MARY ?

7.14 WILLIAM bap 1788 bur 1870 a 82 = (1815) ELIZABETH LITTLE bap 1794 bur 1884 a 89

JOSEPH bap 1789 §7.21

7.11 THOMAS bap 1791 bur 1791 a 0

7.14 HENRY CORNISH bap 1816 T'stock Wes'n bur 1820 a 3

7.17 JOHN bap 1817 T'stock Wes'n d 1905 Blackheath a 88 = (1842) Westminster SUSANNAH HARRIET JOHNSON d 1875 Brighton RD a 64

7.14 WILLIAM bur 1820 a 1

EMMA bap 1820 bur 1898 a 77 Unmarried

7.15 WILLIAM HENRY bap 1822 bur 1904 Landrake a 82 = (1853) Landrake JENNY SPILLER bur 1907 Landrake a 81 No known issue

7.14 JOSEPH bap 1824 bur 1824 a 0

7.16 JAMES bap 1825 ↓ Canada

EMMA ELIZABETH LINGHAM d 1885 Clapham a 55 = (1854) Lambeth

7.19 JOSEPH ALFRED bap 1827 d 1911 Clapham a 83 = (1888) Islington RD

MARY ELIZABETH STAPLETON d 1918 Clapham a 86

7.20 ROBERT bap 1829 d 1909 W-s-Mare a 80 = (1862) Clapham

EMILY CHRISTIANA COX d 1914 W-s-Mare a 88 No known issue

7.14 ELIZABETH GRACE bap 1831 bur 1834 a 2

JANE MADELINE LAWFORD d 1874 Croydon RD a 27 = (1867) Clapham

7.18 WILLIAM JOHN b 1843 Clapham d 1912 Blackheath a 69 = (1875) Lewisham RD ANNIE FRENCH d 1911 Greenwich RD a 67

7.17 FRANCES ELIZABETH b 1845 Clapham d 1905 Blackheath a 60

MARION b 1847 Clapham d 1908 Blackheath a 60

ALICE b 1853 Clapham d 1879 Blackheath a 25

7.18 ARTHUR WILLIAM b 1868 Clapham d 1869 Croydon RD a 1

ERNEST JOHN b 1870 Penge = (1896) Lambeth RD FLORENCE LUCY M. BENHAM

FRANCIS SWINBURNE b 1871 Penge d 1873 Croydon RD a 2

HORACE WILLIAM b 1876 Croydon RD d 1939 Brighton RD a 62 = (1900) Greenwich RD ROSE BEATRICE LEE

ANNIE HELEN MADELINE b 1878 Croydon RD = ??? JAMES BLUNDY

THOMAS HERBERT b 1880 Croydon RD d 1882 Croydon RD a 1

ROBERT GEORGE b 1882 Croydon RD d 1882 Croydon RD a 0

STANLEY LAWFORD b 1884 Croydon RD d 1884 Croydon RD a 0

HAROLD PERCIVAL b 1887 Greenwich RD = (1912) Greenwich RD ETHEL M. DARK

7.19 EVELYN MARY b 1855 Clapham d 1935 Brighton a 80

GRACE EMMA b 1857 Clapham d 1921 Broadwater a 64

IDA JOSEPHINE b 1858c Clapham = (1882) W'sworth RD RICHARD EDWARD NORTON

ALFRED LINGHAM b 1860 Clapham d 1861 Clapham a 0

AGNES EMILY b 1862 Clapham = (1886) W'sworth RD ROBERT E.T.P. HASELFOOT

HERBERT FRANCIS b 1863 Clapham = (1914) Australia MINNIE HOBBS ↓ Australia

FREDERIC(K) ERNEST WILLIAM b 1865 Clapham d 1948 Eastbourne a 82 = (1901) Clapham FRANCES AMELIA WALLIS d 1936 Eastbourne a 74

CECIL OCTAVIUS b 1867 Clapham ↓ California

DESCENDANTS OF JOHN TAPSON OF ST. GERMANS (B#43C) I

Except where otherwise stated, all marriages, baptisms and burials took place at St. Germans; ??? indicates that the parish where the marriage took place is unknown.

7.21 JOSEPH = ??? STEPHANA SPRINGETT

bap 1789
St Germans
d 1832c
???
a 42

d 1841
Ply Charles
a 52

7.21 ROBERT SPRINGETT
b 1814
bap 1814
Newington
bur 1816
Newington
a 1

7.21 STEPHANA SPRINGETT = (1844) Tonbridge RD WILLIAM CROFTS
b 1816
bap 1818
Southwark

7.22 JAMES = (1850) Heathfield ELIZABETH BAKER
b 1817
bap 1818
Southwark
d 1884
S Africa
a 66

d 1892
S Africa
a 73

ANNE ELIZABETH = (1844) Goudhurst ?
d 1864
Kensington RD
a 44c

7.23 ALFRED JOSEPH = (1865) Kensington RD ELIZA RANNIE MACKILLIGIN
b 1819
bap 1819
Southwark
d 1912
Hillingdon
a 92

d 1893
Paddington RD
a 72

7.21 WILLIAM HENRY
b 1820
bap 1822
Southwark
d 1842
Cambridge
a 21

7.21 ANNA
b 1823
bap 1823
Southwark
d 1891
Kensington RD
a 68

7.21 MARGARET ELIZABETH = (1852) Hampstead RD MICHAEL GEORGE GLAZEBROOK
b 1831
bap 1832
Southwark

7.22 JAMES ALFRED
b 1851
Heathfield
d 1933
S Rhodesia
a 81

= (1877)
S Africa
MARY JANE WILSON
d 1916
S Rhodesia
a 60

7.22 Female
b 1852
Heathfield
d 1852
Heathfield
a 0

7.22 WILLIAM HENRY
b 1856
Goudhurst
d 1940
S Africa
a 83

= (1877)
S Africa
EMILY THOMPSON
d 1956
S Africa
a 97

7.22 ALBERT JOSEPH
b 1858
Goudhurst
d 1944
S Africa
a 86

=
S Africa
BEATRICE MARY TREASURE
d 1960
S Africa
a 79

7.22 MARY ELIZABETH
b 1862
Goudhurst
d 1946
S Africa
a 84

=
S Africa

7.23 GRACE ELIZABETH
b 1845c
Marylebone RD

= (1874)
Kensington RD
GEORGE SOLTARE

7.23 ANNIE
b 1847
Marylebone RD

= (1880)
Kensington RD
ROBERT MARQUIS MACKILLIGIN

7.23 STEPHANA MARIA
b 1849
Kensington RD

=
MACKILLIGIN

7.23 EMILY
b 1850
Kensington RD
d 1934
S Africa
a 84

= (1882)
S Africa
GEORGE BLYTH CUTHBERT

7.23 EDITH
b 1851
Kensington RD
d 1931
Reading
a 79

7.23 MARY ALICE
b 1853
Kensington RD

= (1884)
Kensington RD
EDMUND ARTHUR HELPS

7.23 ETHEL SEPTIMA
b 1854
Kensington RD
d 1939
Windsor RD
a 84

7.23 HELEN OCTAVIA
b 1855
Kensington RD

= (1884)
Kensington RD
DAVID BAYNE-JARDINE

7.23 EUNICE
b 1857
Kensington RD
d 1857
Marylebone
a 0

7.23 ANNA MARIA
b 1858c
Marylebone ?
↓
Japan

Unmarried

7.23 ANNE THEODOSIA
b 1864
Kensington RD

=
JAMES HIND

DESCENDANTS OF JOHN TAPSON OF ST. GERMANS (B#43C) II

JOHN (B#70) = (1814) **MARY ANN CURSON**

bap 1792 Bridestowe
bur 1880 a 87

bur 1843 a 48

- **DORCAS** = (1834) **JOHN ENDACOTT**
  - bap 1815
- **WILLIAM** = (1844) **ANN HILL SHEWRING** (Bedminster)
  - bap 1817 bur 1891 Bristol a 74
  - bur 1897 Bristol a 76
  - **WILLIAM SHEWRING** — b 1846 Bristol d 1848 Bristol a 2
  - **FRANK CURSON** — b 1847 Bristol d 1848 Bristol a 1
  - **ANNIE JANE** — b 1848 Bristol d 1930 Bristol a 82 — Unmarried
  - **AGNES MARTHA** — b 1850 Bristol d 1850 Bristol a 0
  - **ALFRED EDWARD** — b 1851 Bristol d 1934 Bristol a 83 — Unmarried
  - **MARSTON EBSWORTHY** — b 1852 Bristol d 1916 Bristol a 64 — = (1884) Bedminster **LOUISA SEBRY** — d 1926 Bristol a 75
  - **ARTHUR HENRY GEORGE** — b 1853 Bristol d 1854 Bristol a 0
  - **FRED AUGUSTUS** — b 1854 Bristol d 1854 Bristol a 0
  - **EDITH MARY** — b 1855 Bristol d 1856 Bristol a 0
  - **EMILY SUSANNA TAYLER** — b 1857 Bristol — = (1901) Bristol **CHARLES FREDERICK DUNN**
  - **CHARLES WILLIAM** — b 1858 Bristol d 1900 Bristol a 42 — Unmarried
  - **LAURA SOPHIA** — b 1859 Bristol d 1861 Bristol a 1
  - **BESSIE LOUISA** — bap 1861 Bristol d 1878 Bristol a 17
  - **ALICE MARY** — bap 1862 Bristol — = (1882) Bristol **JAMES SIMMONDS**
  - **HERBERT SHEWRING** — bap 1864 Bristol d 1864 Bristol a 0
  - **HOWARD SHEWRING** — bap 1866 Bristol d 1883 Bristol *Louisa* a 17
  - **ARCHIBALD ERNEST** — bap 1868 Bristol d 1945 Crosby RD a 76 — = (1899) Toxteth RD **BLANCHE STOTT** — d 1957 Crosby RD a 87
- **GEORGE** — bap 1821 bur 1894 a 73 — Unmarried
- **TRYPHENA** — bap 1823 — = (1852) Okehampton RD ?
- **JOHN** — bap 1827 bur 1848 a 21
- **ELIZABETH ?** — bap 1828c
- **THOMAS CURSON** — bap 1830 bur 1908 a 77 — = (1859) **JOANNA FEWINS** — d 1926 a 94c
  - **MARY ANN** — bap 1860 — = (1883) **EDWARD WOODS**
  - **THOMAS** — bap 1864 d 1949 Devon C RD a 85 — = (1891) St Thomas RD **EMMA COSSEY**
- **ANN STANBURY CURSON** — bap 1836 — = (1859) Chagford **GEORGE BRIMBLECOMBE**

DESCENDANTS OF JOHN TAPSON OF SOUTH TAWTON (B#70)

Except where otherwise stated, all marriages, baptisms and burials took place at South Tawton.

JANE BLATCHFORD = (1815) Coryton
bur 1850 Lydford a 56

THOMAS (B#71)
bap 1793 Bridestowe bur 1882 Lydford a 88

= (1854) Tavistock

NANCY PALMER
bap 1831 Lydford d 1906 Tavistock a 73

MARIA bap 1818 Lydford
= (1837) Coryton ARTHUR HILLMAN

ANN bap 1820 Lydford
= (1842) S Damerel WILLIAM BLATCHFORD

JANE bap 1822 Lydford
= (1847) Bridestowe JOHN TURNER

ELIZABETH bap 1824 Lydford
= (1845) S Damerel GEORGE CHUBB

MARY bap 1827 Lydford
= (1848) Lydford JAMES CHUBB

THOMAS bap 1830 Lydford d 1888 T'stock RD a 58
= (1853) Lamerton MARY FUGE
d 1875 T'stock RD a 45

WILLIAM bap 1833 Lydford bur 1842 Lydford a 9

GEORGE BLATCHFORD bap 1836 Lydford
↓ Ontario
= (1857) T'stock RD JANE PERRY

WILLIAM PALMER bap 1854 Lydford d 1909 Tavistock a 55
= (1874) Plymouth ELLEN PELLOW
d 1918 D'port RD a 67

CATHERINE bap 1855 Lydford
= (1875) Plymouth JOHN HART BURGOYNE

SUSANNAH b 1857 Lamerton
= (1881) Plymouth THOMAS PETHERICK

JOHN bap 1860 Lamerton d 1891 Fulham RD a 32
= (1879) Peter Tavy MARIA GEAKE
d 1885 Fulham RD a 29

= (1887) Fulham RD LUCY PLANT

HANNA bap 1863 Lamerton
= (1886) Plymouth PHILIP HENRY RICH

JAMES bap 1866 Lamerton d 1933 Devonport a 67
= (1889) Hammersmith HARRIET TACON
d 1944 Croydon RD a 80

RICHARD bap 1868 Lamerton d 1870 Lamerton a 1

JOSEPH bap 1870 Lamerton d 1930 Hammersmith a 59
= (1890) Kensington CHARLOTTE ANNIE W.M. HARFORD
d 1946 Hammersmith a 76

JEHU bap 1872 Lamerton d 1932 Plymouth a 59 Unmarried

JANE bap 1854 Lamerton
= (1877) Sydenham Damerel SAMUEL HOCKADAY

THOMAS bap 1857 Lamerton d 1882 Lydford a 24

RICHARD FUGE bap 1859 Lamerton d 1917 St Thomas RD a 57

GRACE FUGE bap 1863 Lamerton
= (1884) Madron WILLIAM CHARLES LEGGO

ALBERT bap 1866 Lamerton
↓ Ontario

SAM bap 1869 Lamerton
= (1891) Launceston RD CLELAND NORTHWAY

FRANK HOPE b 1858c Canada bap 1859 Stowford

MABEL ELLEN bap 1875 Lamerton

BEATRICE KATE b 1877 T'stock RD d 1879 T'stock RD a 2

FRANCIS HORWIN b 1879 Tavistock d 1879 T'stock RD a 0

LAURA ANGELINA b 1880 Tavistock

CHARLES MONTAGUE b 1882 Peter Tavy

BERTRAM GILSON b 1885 Peter Tavy

ALICE MAUD b 1887 Tavistock

WILLIAM FREDERICK b 1889 Tavistock

ETHEL MARIA bap 1880 Peter Tavy

LOUISA MAUDE b 1882 Fulham RD d 1882 Fulham RD a 0

WALTER JOHN b 1885 Fulham RD d 1885 Fulham RD a 0

ARTHUR JOHN b 1888 Fulham RD d 1890 Fulham RD a 2

MAUD LUCY b 1889 Blaxhall

JAMES b 1890 Fulham RD

THOMAS b 1891 Norwich RD

FLORENCE KATHERINE b 1893 Br'ford RD

MABEL HARRIET b 1895 Br'ford RD

ALFRED b 1896 Br'ford RD

DOROTHY ELLEN b 1898 Br'ford RD

RICHARD WILLIAM b 1902 D'port R D

VIOLET JESSIE b 1905 D'port RD

JOSEPH WALTER b 1891 Fulham RD

ALICE KATE b 1892 Kens'ton RD

HENRY JOHN b 1895 Fulham RD

ETHEL MAUD b 1896 Fulham RD

ESTHER FLORENCE M. b 1898 Fulham RD

REGINALD THOMAS V. b 1900 Fulham RD d 1902 Fulham RD a 1

WALTER LEONARD b 1902 Fulham RD

EARLE b 1904 Fulham RD

EMILY SUSANNAH b 1906 Fulham RD

NORA ANNIE M. b 1909 Fulham RD d 1916 H'smith RD a 7

CHRISTABEL b 1910 Fulham RD

ROSALIND D. b 1912 Fulham RD

DESCENDANTS OF THOMAS TAPSON OF LYDFORD & LAMERTON (B#71)

THE TAPSONS OF SOUTH PETHERWIN

Except where otherwise stated, all marriages, baptisms and burials took place at South Petherwin.

*Mary married Richard Congdon at South Petherwin in 1801

MARGARET HAMBLEY bur 1750 = 1736 Bradstone

10.2 JAMES bap 1703 Tavistock bur 1777 a 73 = (1753) ESTHER JORDAN bur 1785

10.2 JANE bap 1737 bur 1737 a 0

10.2 ELIZABETH bap 1738

10.2 JOHN bap 1740 bur 1740 a 0

= (1766) Lifton JONATHAN BOLLON

10.2 MARY bap 1754 = (1773) WILLIAM CONGDON

10.2 JOANNA bap 1755 bur 1783 a 27 = (1780) JAMES MASON

10.3 JAMES bap 1758 bur 1796 St Gluvias a 38 = (1785) MARY GREGORY *

10.2 WILLIAM bap 1760 ?

6.24 CATHERINE bap 1762 bur 1818 a 55 = (1786) EBSWORTHY TAPSON

10.2 ANN bap 1770 bur 1782 a 12

10.4 WILLIAM bap 1786 d 1860 ? Chelsea a 74 = (1813) Glastonbury SARAH TUCKER d 1887 Chelsea a 94c

10.9 JAMES bap 1787 bur 1835 Lifton a 48 = (1817) Lifton ELIZABETH GAY bur 1884 Lifton a 87

10.6 EDMUND GREGORY bap 1789 bur 1850 Chelsea a 61c = (1820) CAROLINE HARVEY bur 1849 Chelsea a 50

10.3 PRISCILLA bap 1793 North Hill = (1829) Tilehurst JAMES SMITH

10.3 REBECCA bap 1795 = (1819) Westminster JOHN LAWRENCE

10.4 JOHN b 1813 bap 1815 Glas'bury d 1840 Han Sq RD a 26

10.4 EDMUND b 1815 bap 1815 Glas'bury bur 1815 Glas'bury a 0

10.5 EDMUND GREGORY b 1816 bap 1816 Glas'bury d 1879 Chelsea a 62 = (1847) Kens'ton RD ELIZABETH ANN JOHNSON d 1860 Chelsea a 30c

10.4 ANN CAROLINE b 1819 bap 1825 Chelsea = (1852) Chelsea

10.4 ANN CATHERINE b 1820 bap 1820 Westminster

10.4 SUSAN b 1825 bap 1825 Chelsea d 1855 Han Sq RD a 30c

10.4 WILLIAM HENRY b 1826 bap 1833 Chelsea ↓ Australia

10.4 GEORGE JOSEPH b 1831 bap 1833 Chelsea ?

10.4 GEORGINA PRISCILLA b 1833 bap 1833 Chelsea

10.5 ELIZABETH ANN bap 1848 Chelsea d 1884 Chelsea RD a 36c

10.5 EDMUND WILLIAM JOHN bap 1849 Chelsea

10.5 ROBERT JAMES b 1852 Chelsea d 1899 Lincoln RD a 47

10.5 MARY ANN bap 1855 Chelsea d 1856 Chelsea a 0

10.5 WILLIAM CHARLES b 1856 Chelsea d 1860 Chelsea a 3

10.5 GEORGE ? b 1860 Chelsea d 1860 Chelsea a 0

10.9 MARY bap 1818 Bratton C d 1900 Lifton a 82

10.9 ELIZABETH bap 1820 Lifton ILLEGITIMATE 10.9 EDWIN bap 1853 Exeter = (1879) Ply St Andrew LAURA GLIDDON

10.9 JANE bap 1822 Bridestowe bur 1830 Lifton a 7

10.9 PRISCILLA bap 1825 Bridestowe = (1849) S Damerel GEORGE HARVEY

10.9 JAMES bap 1828 Lifton ?

10.9 WILLIAM bap 1830 Lifton ?

10.9 JOHN bap 1832 Lifton ?

10.6 MARY CONGDON bap 1821 Boyton = (1845) Chelsea WILLIAM THOMAS PERKINS VENN

10.6 JOANNA bap 1822 Boyton

10.7 JAMES b 1824 bap 1824 Lanson d 1885 Chelsea a 60 = (1844) Battersea ELIZABETH JANE FARMILOE d 1880? Barnet RD a 53

ILLEGITIMATE TWIN SONS OF JAMES AND CAROLINE JEMIMA RICHMOND

10.8 WILLIAM b 1831 bap 1832 Chelsea d 1889 Battersea a 58 = (1852) Lambeth RD RACHEL STRACEY d 1891 Battersea a 57

10.7 JAMES GREGORY b 1848 Han Sq RD bur 1848 Hanover Sq a 0

10.7 JAMES b 1862 Battersea

10.7 WILLIE b 1862 Battersea d 1862 W'worth RD a 0

10.8 EDMUND JAMES b 1854 Chelsea = (1876) Chelsea RD EMILY

10.8 WILLIAM b 1858 Chelsea

10.8 ROLAND b 1860c Chelsea = (1903) ? Padd'ton RD

10.8 RACHEL JANE b 1864 Chelsea = (1902) S New'ton SAMUEL GEORGE STENTON

10.8 HARRIETT b 1866 Chelsea = (1887) Chelsea RD WALTER VOUGHT

10.8 CONSTANCE CAROLINE b 1869 Chelsea d 1890 Kens'ton RD a 21

10.8 JANE b 1869 Chelsea d 1870 Battersea a 0

10.8 CHARLES b 1872 Battersea = (1899) W'worth RD WINIFRED HARDING

10.8 JANE GREGORY b 1874 Battersea

10.8 ELIZABETH b 1877 Battersea d 1878 Battersea a 1

10.8 FREDERICK b 1879 Battersea = (1901) S New'ton MATILDA GREEVE

EARLY HISTORY

OF THE

TAPSON FAMILY